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THE
LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

TRANSLATED, WITH INTRODUCTION
AND NOTES, BY

O. M. DALTON, M.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOLUME II

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BOOK IV

I

To his friend Probus

A.D. 461–7

You married my cousin [1], whence the first and princi- 1
pal tie between us; the cousinly relationship often leads to a stronger, purer, and more unmixed affection than that between two brothers. For when brothers' quarrels over property are once appeased, their children have no longer cause for disagreement, and so it often happens that cousins are the more deeply attached; the enmities arising from the partition of estates are over, the tie of blood relationship remains. The second link between us is intellectual, and formed by a similarity of studies; our literary taste is identical; we praise and blame the same things; a style approved or disapproved by one produces the same impression on the other. But I am 2
presumptuous in venturing a comparison between my judgement and yours. It is common knowledge among young and old that you were my real master, though we were nominally both pupils of another. You were everybody's teacher in every branch of literature. All of us learned from you, except those who had not the brains, or could not do themselves proper justice: our epic poets derived from you their lofty vein, our comic poets their humour, our lyric poets their musical art; from

you the orator drew his rhetoric, the historian his respect for truth, the satirist his pictorial gift, the grammarian his fidelity to rule, the panegyrist his plausibility, the sophist his gravity of style, the writer of epigram his petulance and point, the commentator his lucid method, the lawyer his obscurity. Heavens! how proud our respective fathers used to be when they saw that Christ had given you grace to teach and me to learn, that you not only did what lay within your power but also enjoyed the doing of it, and so deserved a name
3 for goodness no less than a learned reputation. And indeed in your case Eusebius' house[1] proved a veritable mint of the sciences and arts; you were there struck on a philosophical die, and to the delight of your own instructor were able to impart to the rest of us every phase of knowledge and of eloquent expression. Just as Plato the pupil was more expert than Socrates, so did you excel our good Eusebius. While he was maturing our tender, unformed and plastic youth with ruthless floggings, or trying to ground it on wholesome principles, there you were, a dialectician born, moving with Attic ease through all the categories of Aristotle.

4 Yet how admirable his principles were after all, how precious in possession! If only some migratory philosopher could export them to the Sigambri on their marshes, or the Alans of the Caucasus, or the mare-milking Geloni, the horny hearts of all these stark and brutal folks, yes and all their frozen fibres, were surely thawed and softened, while we should cease to sneer and scoff, and tremble by turns at their stolidity and their ferocious natures, which now brood in bestial

dullness, now burst into swift flame. Since, then, our family connexion and our studies thus unite us, preserve the laws of friendship unshaken, wherever your abode may be; though my home is far from yours, let our hearts draw nearer by virtue of this affection, which I for my part will keep inviolate as long as breath remains in my body. Farewell. 5

II

Claudianus [Mamertus[1]*] to the Lord Bishop Sidonius*

A. D. 472

If I could only meet you now and again, my dear lord, were it only for a short time, I should not have to look about on all sides for any kind of messenger whose goodwill or necessities might help me pay the debt of correspondence owed you. Numerous causes, all sad ones, prevent me from seeing you again; even an opportunity of writing comes rarely or not at all. Whether all this excuses me or not, you yourself must judge. 1

But in often favouring with your letters persons who either do not expect them, or deserve to get them less than I, you on your side are guilty of an offence against the laws of friendship which may not be committed with impunity. Though I have said little, I confess that it has wounded me never to have received from you any acknowledgement of the book[2] which you have deigned to allow me to publish under the auspices of your illustrious name. But perhaps you cannot spare even 2

a few short moments for a friendship of such long standing as ours?

3 I wonder if you will ever involve yourself in any interest which does not turn to other folks' advantage. When you propitiate God by prayer, you entreat Him not only for your friends but for men you have never seen; when you search out the mysteries of Holy Writ, the more deeply your own mind is imbued with doctrine, the fuller the stream which you impart to others. When you lavish your goods upon the poor, there is a sense in which you may be said to serve yourself, but your aim is the service of others. Not a single action of yours is so barren as to yield abundant fruit to your sole self and not to a host of other people
4 as well. No possible pretext, then, can be alleged by any stretch of fancy on which an intimate friend like myself should be deprived of his own especial fruit, while strangers in scores are allowed to eat of it in plenty. I suppose you follow the precedent of the giver in the Gospel, and accord to the unworthy but importunate what you deny to a hungering friend. But if you allow yourself to grow hardened in this habit, I shall take measures to assure your repentance. For if your taciturnity exceeds all reason, my communications shall do the same. It is quite evident that you will have to be punished by my letters, as I myself am punished by your silence. Farewell.

III

To Claudianus [Mamertus]

A.D. 472

You declare, most honoured master, that I have 1
offended against the laws of friendship: you allege that
though it is my turn to give you epistolary greeting,
I have let my tablets and stylus lie, and no traveller's
hand has been burdened with papyrus of mine inscribed
with my assiduous wishes for your welfare. The sugges-
tion is unfair; you cannot really suppose that any man
on earth, with the least devotion to Latin letters, would
lightly submit his compositions to the ordeal of being
read to you; you, with whose accomplishments, but for
the overwhelming privilege of antiquity, I should never
rank either Fronto's gravity, or the fulminating force
of Apuleius; for compared with you the Varros, both
he of the Atax and he of Reate, and the Plinies, uncle
and nephew, will always seem provincial. In support of 2
this opinion I have only to mention your new volume on
the nature of the Soul, with all its wealth of evidence
and mastery of diction. The dedication to me I regarded
as an inestimable gift: the fame which my own books
would never keep alive, would now be immortalized by
yours. Great God! what a wonderful book it is, and of
what authority! abstruse in subject, in exposition clear
as day; in statement serried, expansive in discussion,
and though barbed with many a point of syllogism, yet
soft with vernal flowers of eloquence! You have found 3
ancient words which by their very age regain the charm of
novelty; compared with these even a classic vocabulary

seems obsolete. And what is more, the style, so succinct in its short clauses, has yet an even flow; loaded with facts, concise in comment, these pages do not merely propound—they inform. It was once, and rightly, held the highest part of eloquence to condense much matter into a small space and aim at exhausting the
4 subject before the paper. And what a charming feature it is in your books, when you allow some relaxation in the sustained display of mastery and interpose most welcome graces amid the severities of argument; by this means the reader's attention, strained by following that exhaustive analysis of doctrine and philosophy, is suddenly relieved by the most delightful of digressions, comforting as harbours after open seas. O work of endless excellences! O worthy expression of a genius subtle without tenuity, which neither freshets of hyperbole
5 swell, nor mean terms minish and abase! And then the unrivalled, the unique learning conspicuous in so many fields, and used to hold its own with the great masters in the discussion of every art. It does not hesitate, if need be, to wield the plectrum with Orpheus himself, or the staff with Aesculapius, or the rule with Archimedes, the horoscope with Euphrates, the compasses with Perdix, the plummet with Vitruvius; it never ceases to explore the ages with Thales, or the stars with Atlas; to study weight with Zetus, number with Chrysippus, or measure
6 with Euclid.[1] I can only say that no man of our times produces his knowledge with more effect, in the stress of conflict with the adversary can point with more justice to his own share in maintaining the spirit and the letters of Greece and Rome. Here is a writer who has the perception of Pythagoras, the clear logic

of Socrates; he can unfold a theme with Plato or involve it with Aristotle; the charm of Aeschines is his, and the indignation of Demosthenes; he is as fresh and vivid as Hortensius; he storms like a Cethegus; he is impetuous as Curio, cautious as Fabius; in finesse the equal of Crassus, in reserve of Caesar, in suasion of Cato, in dissuasion of Appius, in persuasion of Tully himself. Compare him now with the holy Fathers; you 7
find him instructive as Jerome, destructive as Lactantius, constructive as Augustine; soaring in flight like Hilary, in humility meek as John; a Basil in rebuke, in consolation a Gregory. He is fluent as Orosius, terse as Rufinus; he has Eusebius' gift of narrative and Eucherius' power to stir, Paulinus' rousing voice, the perseverance of an Ambrose. And now for my opinion 8
on your hymn.[1] I find it at once admirable in brevity and richness of content, at once tender and exalted, in poetic charm and truth to history superior to any lyrics or dithyrambs that I know. It is your peculiar merit that you observe each foot in the metre, each syllable in the foot, and each emphasis in the syllable; and in a restricted measure none too rich in opportunity, you contrive to include great opulence of words; the compressed, terse metre does not exclude long-drawn beauty of ornate diction. It seems mere play to you, with your tiny trochees and tinier pyrrhics, to surpass in effect not merely the Molossian and anapaestic ternary, but even the quaternary, the epitrite and Paeonian rhythms.

Your grand exordium overflows the customary strait 9
limits, as a great gem is hardly confined in a poor setting; as the mettle of a strong steed flashes out, and he chafes on the bit if he is held in over rough and

broken ground; so it is with you; you are conscious of a speed to which a proper field is denied. What more shall I say? I will assert that neither Athens was ever so Attic, nor the Muses so musical as Claudian, if indeed a long period of inaction has not robbed me even of my critical capacity. For in deference to the profession which has been thrust upon me,[1] I am endeavouring step by step to acquire a new style of writing, while I unlearn my old one by leaps and bounds; little remains now of a good speaker, except that I am more than ever the indifferent poet.[2] I must therefore beg your indulgence if, remembering who and what I am, I seldom blend my thin and parching rivulet with your mighty river. The whole world shall honour the music of your silver trumpet, music thrice blessed in finding neither rival nor equal, though it has sounded all these years over the earth, charming the ears and lips of peoples, while I, too, strove to spread its fame. But all that your servant now dares in public speech is to raise his voice among town-councillors and teachers or even among market-quacks; these are the majority now, and (with all apologies to the best among them), even in their ambitious efforts, but illiterately lettered. But as for you, who can ring the changes on verse and prose and write in metre or without it exactly when you please, your emulators will be few, and those only whom Apollo loves.[3] Farewell.

IV

To [his kinsmen] Simplicius and Apollinaris

c. A.D. 472

At last I send the promised Faustinus,[1] for whom you have been waiting; he is the father of a family, a noble by birth, and a man to be accounted one of the chief ornaments of our common country. In years he is a brother to me, in community of sentiment a friend. How often have he and I together blended grave and gay! how often, in the far-off days of our youth, played ball and dice together, and vied in leaping, running, hunting, or swimming, always honourable rivals because firmest friends! He was my elder, but only by a little; the difference did not so much bind me to defer to him, as make it a delight to follow; he too was more deeply charmed not to be given deference, but simply affection. Only with advancing years, and with his entry into the Church, has my old love for him insensibly passed into veneration. This is the man through whom I greet you, in the ardent desire that I may see you very soon, if God will, and the state of the country permit. Unless, then, my wish is irksome to you, inform me, by return of this good messenger, in what places you expect to be, and when. I am firmly determined to shake myself free from all obstacles and hindrances of personal affairs, and allow myself the privilege of long and intimate hours in your society, if only some major force does not upset my plans, as I am half afraid it may. You too might find it worth while

to talk them over with Brother Faustinus in the light of probable events. I made him my envoy because I love him and know that he returns my feelings. If he justifies my good opinion, I shall be very thankful. All men set him high in their esteem; and perhaps he is none the worse for not being a perfect paragon. Farewell.

V

To his friend [Magnus] Felix

A. D. 474

1 I SALUTE you a second time by the same messenger as before. Your Gozolas[1] (may I soon call him mine too!) acts once more as the carrier of my letter. Spare us both, therefore, the indignity of an open slight; for if you persist in silence, every one will think that you look down on me and on the destined bearer of your reply.

2 As on the last occasion, I ask nothing as to the state of public affairs, fearing it may be painful to you to announce unfavourable events at a time when fortune fails us. It would not be like you to send false news; and as there is nothing pleasant to record, I would rather learn of disaster from any one but my friends. Farewell.

VI

To [his kinsman] Apollinaris

A. D. 472

1 I SENT you a verbal warning lately by the priest Faustinus, my old comrade and new brother in the ministry, and glad I am that you have listened to it. It is the root-principle of practical wisdom to avoid

unnecessary risks; if a man takes them, and a rash course ends in trouble, it is futile to break out into lamentations and abuse Fate for the consequences of one's own bad management. You ask the trend of these remarks. 2
I confess I was much afraid that, at a time when all men felt anxiety, you might feel none; and that the house which stood solid as a rock through all these years might be shaken at last through a misplaced devotion. I feared that the solemnity to which the ladies of your family so looked forward might be spoiled for their gentle souls by these alarms, though I well know that true religion is so deeply implanted in their breasts that they would have rejoiced to suffer a sort of martyrdom in honour of the Martyr[1] had anything untoward befallen upon the way. But I have less innocence, and therefore more distrust of events; amid such uncertainties I prefer the safer side; it takes little to make me join those who discover danger in the very heart of safety. I therefore approve your action in putting off so perilous 3
an expedition, and refusing to expose the fortunes of a family like yours to such a hazard. The journey, once undertaken, might possibly have prospered; but I for one will never vote for the reckless kind of measure which only luck can justify. Providence, I doubt not, will grant a happy issue to our prayers, and under new blessings of peace we shall look back upon these terrors as mere memories; but those who wish to enjoy security in future must learn caution from the present hour. Mean- 4
while, I draw your attention to the bearer's complaint of some wrong done him by one of your people, by name Genesius. If you find that facts bear out the grievance, I beg of you to do the plaintiff justice and grant him

a quick return to his distant home. But if he has fanned up a flame of calumny out of culpable spite, the defendant can enjoy the foretaste of his discomfiture, when he thinks of his wanton accuser, wayworn and impoverished, bearing all for nothing the hard consequences of a rash accusation, and that at the very height of winter, when the ice is thick and the snow lies piled in drifts. The litigious are apt to find this a season when hearings are generally short, but there is plenty of time for suffering damage. Farewell.

VII

To his kinsman Simplicius

(Date not indicated)

1 'You spur the willing,'[1] is the usual comment of the man who meant to do unasked the thing you ask of him. You ask how the quotation applies? The bearer of these lines insists on a letter of introduction from me, whereas, the moment I knew where he was going I should myself have begged the privilege of giving it before he opened his mouth, obliging him not so much from consideration for him as from my warm feeling towards yourself. For the rest, my messenger calculates that by doing me a service he will have deserved a good turn; he has obtained what he wanted, but without ever dreaming how close the bond is which unites you
2 and me. Miles away though I remain, I shall be able to picture his stupefaction on his arrival, when the mere fact that he comes from me secures him respectful welcome, and he finds no effectual use for a letter which it was really superfluous to solicit. I can see it all as if I were there; the novelty of everything to one whose

wits are not of the sharpest; his confusion as a stranger invited to make himself at home, or as a nervous guest drawn into conversation, or as a countrified fellow called on to take his part in polite gaiety, or as a poor man set down at a sumptuous board. It will be strange indeed to a man from these parts, where ill-cooked viands and too much onion afford the only fare, to find himself as nobly regaled as if he had eaten his fill all his days at Apician banquets, served by the rhythmic carvers of Byzantium.[1] Anyhow, whatever his merit or 3
importance, he could not have better helped me to pay my debt of friendship. Men of his type are often almost beneath our notice; at the same time friends who, like ourselves, are thrown back on letters for their intercourse would lose many a chance of writing were they too particular about the person of their messengers. Farewell.

VIII

*To his friend Evodius**

A.D. 467 (?)

I WAS just setting out for a remote country district when your messenger handed me your letter, and told his acquaintances in confidence that you were on the point of visiting Toulouse in obedience to a summons from the King. This gave me an excuse to shake off the embarrassing crowd which delayed my early start, and allowed me to give you such reply as a traveller booted and spurred could attempt. My servants had 2
gone ahead at dawn to pitch my tent eighteen miles away at a spot with many conveniences for camping,

* The first part translated by Hodgkin, ii. 330–2.

a cold spring issuing from a wooded hill with a meadow of rich grass at the foot; a river in the foreground stocked with waterfowl and fish; and in addition to these advantages, almost on the bank, the new home of an old friend whose boundless hospitality
3 is the same, whether you try to refuse it or not. After stopping behind to do what you required, that I might send the messenger back at once from the end of the town, I found it was already more than four hours after dawn; the sun was well up, and his gathering heat had absorbed the heavy dews of night. The torrid air and our parched throats got worse and worse, and so cloudless was the sky that the only protection from the blazing heat was the dust we made ourselves. The long way was a weariness, stretching in full view for miles in front of us across the grassy plain; before it had time to tire us, it already terrified by its prospect;
4 it meant that our lunch would be late. All this introduction is to convince you, honoured lord and brother, that when I obeyed your behests I had small time to spare and little leisure of mind or body. I return now to the substance of your letter. After the usual salutations, you asked a poem of twelve verses suitable for engraving on a large two-handled cup, the sides of which from foot to rim were fluted with six channels.
5 The verses you design, I suppose, for the hollows of the flutings, or, better still, if that seems more suitable, for the ridges between, and, as I gather, you intend to assure yourself an invincible protection for all your plans, actual or prospective, by offering the cup, enriched with this embellishment, to Ragnahild, the queen.[1] I did your bidding then, not as I could have wished,

but as best circumstances allowed. You must blame yourself for giving the silversmith time but the poet none; though you know perfectly well that in the literary smithy the verses forged upon the metric anvil want polishing no less severely than any metal. But all this is beside the mark; here is your poem: * 'The shell which bears Cythera behind the fish-tailed Triton, compared with this must yield its pride of place. Bend thy queenly head, exalted patroness, to our prayer; accept this humble gift; graciously look down upon Evodius who seeks thy favour; make him great, and thine own glory shall grow greater. Thy sire and thy lord's sire were kings; royal too is thy lord, may thy son also reign a king, both by his father's side and after him. Happy water enclosed in this gleaming metal, reflecting a royal face yet brighter! For when the queen shall deign to touch it with her lips, the silver shall draw new splendour from her countenance.'

If you love me well enough to make use of such idle stuff, conceal my authorship and properly rely for success on your own part of the offering. For in such a mart or such a school[1] as this barbaric court, your silver page will get all the notice, and not my poor inscription. Farewell.

IX

To his friend Industrius †

c. A.D. 472

I RECENTLY visited the illustrious Vectius, and was 1
able to study his way of life at close quarters as

* Translated into German verse by Fertig, Part i, p. 32; and into prose by Chaix, i. 353.

† Translated by Hodgkin, ii. 340–2.

leisurely as if I had nothing else to do. I found it well worth knowing, and therefore not unworthy of description. In the first place, and this may rightly be regarded as the highest praise of all, the whole household emulates the master's flawless purity of life. His servants are efficient, those in the country obliging, those at his town house friendly, obedient and contented with their lord. His table is open to the stranger no less than to his own clients; there reigns a large hospitality,
2 and an even larger moderation. It is of less moment that the man of whom we speak is without a rival in training a horse, judging a dog, or in bearing hawk afield; that his dress is always exquisite and his girdle to match, that all his accoutrements are splendid. The majesty of his gait accords with his gravity of mind, and as the first secures him consideration abroad, so the last maintains his dignity at home. His is an indulgence which does not spoil, a punishment without brutality, a tempered
3 severity, stern but never dreadful. With all this he is a regular reader of the Scriptures; even at meal times he enjoys this nutriment of the soul. He studies the Psalms, and yet more frequently chants them, setting a new precedent by living after this fashion in martial dress, the complete monk in all but the monastic habit.[1] Though he abstains from eating game, he indulges in the chase; to have the sport without the spoil accords
4 with the secret delicacy of his religious feeling. The comfort of his widower's life is his little daughter, sole pledge of his lost wife's love; he brings her up with the tenderness of a grandfather, a mother's sedulous care, a father's kindness. In addressing his servants he does not give way to violence, and he is not above

taking their advice upon occasion; in investigating an offence he is never inquisitorial, he rules those under him by reason and not mere authority: you might take him for the steward in his own house. All this virtue 5
and moderation seemed to me to deserve recording for the benefit of others; the outlines of it at least should be common knowledge. It would be well for our age if every member of our sacred profession were stirred to emulation by the story irrespective of a garb which in these days often deceives the world. For be it said without offence to my own order, if only the good men among us manifest their individual qualities, I shall prefer the layman of priestly instincts to the priest. Farewell.

X

To his friend [Magnus] Felix

A.D. 477

It is many years since I have written to you, my good 1
lord, and this greeting breaks a long silence; I had not the heart to keep up the old frequent correspondence while I was living in banishment from my country, and my spirit was broken by the hard lot of an exile. You ought to have compassion on one who admits his delinquency as I do; for whosoever is brought low should go humbly and not attempt to preserve the same familiar footing as before with those towards whom affection may be less in place than reverence. That is why I have said nothing so long, and why, after the arrival of my son Heliodorus,[1] I could at least acquiesce in your silence, though I could hardly be expected to regard it with satisfaction.

2 You used to say, in jest, that you stood in positive awe of my eloquence. Even were it seriously meant, the ground for that excuse is gone; for as soon as I had finished my volume of Letters, which, though I say it, was a careful piece of work, I reverted to the every-day style in everything else. And indeed my fine style itself is much on the same level; for what is the use of giving finish to phrases which will never see the light? If, however, you are faithful to an old friendship and allow our correspondence once more to follow its former course, I too will return to the old track and be as communicative as ever. Nay more, if Christ will guide my steps and my patron[1] on his return will only sanction my departure, how eagerly will I fly to meet you wherever you may be, and revive by my presence a friendship which my negligent pen has left to languish. Farewell.

XI

*To his friend Petreius**

c. A.D. 473

1 I MOURN the loss of your great uncle Claudianus, snatched from us only the other day; it is the loss of our age; perhaps we shall never see his like again. He was a man of wisdom, prudence and learning; eloquent, and of an active and ingenious mind above all his compatriots and contemporaries. He was a philosopher all his days without prejudice to his faith. It

* Most of this letter is translated by Guizot, *Histoire de la civilisation en France*, ed. 1846, i. 167–8. See also Fertig, Part iii, p. 10.

was only by his faith, and by his adoption of ordinary dress, that he dissociated himself from his friends of the Platonic school; for he never let his hair and beard grow long and would make fun of the philosopher's mantle and staff, sometimes with much bitterness. How delightful it used to be when a party of us would 2
visit him just for the pleasure of hearing his opinion! With what freedom from diffidence or pretence would he at once open his whole mind for our common benefit, delighted if some insoluble and thorny point arose to prove the vast resources of his knowledge! If there were many of us, he expected us all, of course, to listen, but nominated a single spokesman, probably the one whom we ourselves should have chosen; then in his methodical way, now addressing one, now another, and giving each his turn, he would bring forth all the treasures of his learning, not without the accompaniment of trained and appropriate gesture. When he had finished, we 3
would put our adverse criticisms in syllogistic form; but nothing was admitted which was not well considered and susceptible of proof, for rash objections he would at once demolish. Most of all we respected him for his tolerance of some men's persistent dullness of apprehension. It amounted almost to an amiable weakness; we could admire his patience, but it was beyond our imitation. Who could shrink from consulting on any recondite point a man who would gladly suffer in argument the stupid questions of the ignorant and the simple?

So far as to his intellectual interests. It is beyond 4
my power adequately to extol him in other relations of life. Mindful in all things of our weak mortal nature, he was always ready with consolation, helping the

clergy by his deeds, the people by his words, mourners with exhortation, the destitute with words of comfort. He gave the prisoner money; he fed the hungry, he clothed the naked. To enlarge upon these things were indeed vanity of repetition. He was poor in this world's goods, but the good deeds with which he richly endowed his soul he concealed from notice
5 in the hope of a better reward hereafter. . . . For his elder brother the bishop[1] he had the most affectionate regard; he reverenced him as a father, he loved him as a son. And the brother in his turn looked up to him with boundless admiration, knowing that he had in him a counsellor in every disputed question, a representative in his churches, an agent in business matters, a steward on his farms, a registrar of all ecclesiastical dues, an associate in his reading, an interpreter in difficulties of exposition, a travelling companion upon his visitations. They were the very exemplars of brotherly affection, with an absolute confidence in each other.
6 But why do I add fuel to the flame of a sorrow which it was my purpose to assuage? I meant to have begun by saying that I have written an elegy to this ungrateful shade—the phrase is Virgil's, as you know, and applied to the dead, who can render no man thanks. They are sad lines full of sorrow; the writing of them was no light task to one who has lost the habit of composing; but grief heavy with rising tears moved me from my natural indolence. This is the elegy:

'Beneath this sod lies Claudianus, at once the glory and grief of his brother Mamertus, the wonder and supreme pride of the bishops. In three fields of learning he was a master and a shining light, the

Roman, the Greek, and the Christian; all of them as a monk in his prime he made his own by secret discipline; he was orator, logician, poet, commentator, geometer, musician; skilled also to loose the bonds of disputation, and with the sword of the word dissect the sects[1] that harass the Catholic faith. Well was he skilled to chant psalms and lead a choir; for his grateful brother he taught the trained groups of singers to chant before the altar. His was the choice that at the yearly conclave appointed the passages to be read in season. A priest of the second order,[2] he eased his brother's shoulder of the bishop's burden; for while the other bore the insignia of pontifical rank, it was he who undertook the labour. But thou whoe'er thou art that grievest, O kindly reader, over the thought that of such a man nothing now survives, wet not this marble with thy tears: the mind and its renown come not down into this grave.'

Such are the lines that I composed over the remains 7
of this brother of my soul, as soon as I reached the spot. For when they buried him I was away, though absence did not wholly rob me of the longed opportunity for tears. For while I was pondering what to write, my heart swelled to overflowing; I gave it rein, and over my epitaph I wept as others had wept above the tomb. I write this to you for fear you should imagine that my devotion is only to living friends, and censure me as one who thinks less tenderly of those who are gone than of those who are yet alive. And indeed, in days when hardly a trace of loyalty remains among survivors, you might well be pardoned for counting as a small company those who are faithful to the departed. Farewell.

XII

To [his kinsmen] Simplicius and Apollinaris *

c. A.D. 472

1 THE excitable mind of man is like nothing so much as a wrecking sea; it is lashed to confusion by contrary tidings as if it bred its own rough weather. A few days ago, I and the son whom we both regard as ours were together enjoying the admirable *Hecyra* of Terence. Seated at his side as he studied, I forgot the cleric in the father; to increase his ardour and incite my docile scholar to a more perfect appreciation of the comic rhythms, I had in my own hands a play with a similar plot, the *Epitre-*
2 *pontes* [1] of Menander. We were reading, and jesting, and applauding the fine passages—the play charmed him, and he me, we were both equally absorbed,—when all of a sudden a household slave appears, pulling a long face. 'I have just seen outside', he said, 'the reader Constans, back from his errand to the lords Simplicius and Apollinaris. He says that he delivered your letters, but
3 has lost the answers given him to bring back.' No sooner did I hear this, than a storm-cloud of annoyance rose upon the clear sky of my enjoyment; the mischance made me so angry that for several days I was inexorable and forbade the blockhead my presence; I meant to make him sorry for himself unless he restored me the letters all and sundry, to say nothing of yours, which as long as I am a reasonable being

* Translated by Hodgkin, ii. 340–2.

I shall always want most because they come least often. However, after a time my anger gradually abated; 4
I sent for him and asked whether, besides the letters, he had been entrusted with a verbal message. He was all a-tremble and ready to grovel at my feet; he stammered in conscious guilt, and could not look me in the face, but he managed to answer: 'Nothing.' The message from which I was to have received so much instruction and delight, had been all consigned to the pages which had been lost. So there is nothing else for it; you must resort to your tablets once more, unfold your parchment, and write it all out anew. I shall bear with such philosophy as I may this unfortunate obstacle to my desires until the hour when these lines reach you, and you learn that yours have never yet reached me. Farewell.

XIII

To his friend Vectius.

c. A.D. 472

Not long ago I went to see the church of Chantelle[1] 1
at the request of the excellent Germanicus, who is clearly the personage of the place. Though he now has sixty years behind him, he cultivates such bravery of fashion that not content with growing younger, he gets more boyish every day. His clothes fit close, his boots are tight, his hair is cut wheel-fashion; the tweezers have searched the depths of all his wrinkles to get every single hair out of his face. Heaven has given 2
him strong and well-knit limbs, an unimpaired sight, an easy and rapid gait; his teeth are complete and his mouth

wholesome. He has a perfect digestion, an even circulation, a sound heart and lungs, his loins are free from stiffness, his liver from congestion. His hand is firm, his back straight, endowed with the health of youth, all he asks for age is its proper privilege of
3 respect. God has indeed shown him peculiar mercies. But on that very account I beg, nay, I enjoin you, as a neighbour and intimate friend, to give him a piece of that advice which a character like yours invests with such authority: tell him not to put his trust too much in such unstable things, or fancy himself immune from all decay; tell him it is high time for him to embrace religion, to gather strength from innocence reborn, and by good deeds to become a new man in his old age.
4 Tell him that few of us are free from secret faults, and it were well for him to pour forth full and open satisfaction for all the hidden offences which memory can recall. A man who is a priest's son and has a son of his own a bishop, must sanctify his own life, or he will be even as a rosebush. Of roses born, and bearing the same, he comes between the old bloom and the new; and the briery thorns about him may be likened to his wounding sins. Farewell.

XIV

To his friend Polemius

A.D. 477

1 Cornelius Tacitus your ancestor, consular in the reigns of the Ulpians,[1] in his history introduces a German Commander[2] as saying, 'My acquaintance with Vespasian goes back to old days, and while he

was a private person we were called friends.' You ask the object of this preface. To remind you that your position as a public man ought not to involve neglect of private friendships. Almost two years ago, our old regard for you rather than our satisfaction at your new dignity, led us to rejoice over your elevation to the post of praetorian prefect in Gaul. But for the misfortunes of the Empire, nothing would satisfy us but the enrichment of everybody and every province by the various benefits of your administration. And 2
now that proper feeling prevents us from asking what it is beyond your power to grant, I should like to know what generosity you would have shown us in deed, when in word you have proved so obstinately avaricious. For if I compare you with your ancestors, I must consider you more than the equal of Tacitus in eloquence, and in poetry above Ausonius. If this new prefecture has turned a philosopher's head, remember the line:

We too have served for name and fame.[1]

But if you scorn the lowliness of our profession 3
because we priests voluntarily lay bare before Christ, the Healer of human lives and fortunes, the ugly sores of the sick heart, which in us are at least unswollen by pride, however much they may have hitherto offended for want of proper tending, I would have you know this, that it is one thing for a man to stand before the magistrate in the forum, another thing for him to stand before the Judge of all the world. The offender who avows his crime to you is condemned; but among us the same confession made to God is absolved.[2] It is therefore abundantly clear that you judges of this world are wrong

in fastening guilt on him who is amenable to another
4 jurisdiction than yours. You cannot therefore any longer ignore the force of my complaint; whether your prosperity makes you forget old friendship, or only neglect it, the result in either case is almost equally bitter to me. If, then, you have any serious thoughts of the future, write to me as to a priest; if of the present, as to a colleague. There is a virtue which never disdains an old friend for a new one; if it was born in you, develop it; if not, at once implant it in your heart. Otherwise you will appear to treat your friends as one does flowers, which are only cherished as long as they are fresh. Farewell.

XV

To his friend Elaphius

AFTER A.D. 472

1 MAKE ready a great feast, and couches to receive a great company. By numerous roads parties yet more numerous converge upon you, for since the date of your coming dedication is now universally known, all our good friends are bent upon invasion. Your letter tells us that the baptistery so long in the builder's hands is now ready for consecration. We must all keep festival in honour of the faith that we own, and some of us for other causes too; you to celebrate the accomplishment of your vow; I to do my part as bishop; and many others to show their recognition of your enterprise. For indeed you set a great precedent, erecting a new fabric in an epoch when other men have
2 hardly courage to repair an old one.[1] For the future

I pray that as your present vow is paid, you may make new vows to the glory of God to be redeemed in coming prosperous years; and that, too, not as the expression of a concealed faith, but of manifest conversion. I further pray that in happier times than these Christ may grant my own desire and the hope of the people of Rouergue, and that you who now offer an altar for your own soul's weal, may then offer the holy Sacrifice for theirs. Though the days draw in with the late 3
autumn, and leaves from every tree rustle in the anxious traveller's ear; though your castle of the mountain crags is hard to reach when winter is so near, yet with Christ to guide my steps I shall traverse your rugged mountain flanks; I shall not shrink from rocks beneath or overhanging snows; no, not even if the way winds in spirals up the long slopes and returns continually upon itself. For should there be no festivities after all, yet you are one of those for whom, to use the words of Tully,[1] a man would even tramp to Thespiae. Farewell.

XVI

To his friend Ruricius

(No indication of date)

PATERNINUS has given me your letter; I can hardly 1
say whether it pleases most by wit or charm. It presents such eloquence, such fragrant flowers of diction, that your progress is clearly due to something more than an acknowledged study: you must be working in secret as well. The abstraction of a book of mine to copy, for which you so apologize, I regard

as an act redounding to your credit, and requiring no excuse. What can you do really wrong, when even
2 your faults are laudable? I am not the least vexed at being played this little trick in my absence; it is no loss at all, but really a signal privilege. The volume you appropriated to your use has not therefore ceased to be my property; your knowledge has not been increased at the cost of other people's. On the contrary, you shall have full credit for your action, and rightly; for your nature has the quality of flame, which communicates itself entirely and yet remains entire; it is proper that you should act like your own element. Be no more uneasy, then; that were to betray a little too much uncertainty of your friend, who would only deserve the wound of blame were he vulnerable by the dart of envy. Farewell.

XVII

To his friend Arbogast

c. A.D. 477

1 Your friend Eminentius, honoured lord, has delivered a letter dictated by yourself, admirable in style, and bearing in every line the evidence of three shining virtues. The first is the friendliness which leads you to esteem the lowly talents of one so far away,[1] and so anxious to avoid publicity. The second is the modesty which makes you over-sensitive to blame, but deservedly wins you praise. The third is the gentle humour which makes you in the wittiest way accuse yourself of writing wretched stuff, whereas you have drunk at the well-spring

of Roman eloquence, and no draughts from the Moselle can take the taste of Tiber from your mouth. You have your conversation among barbarians, yet you permit no barbarism to pass your lips; in eloquence and valour you equal those ancient generals whose hands could wield the stylus no less skilfully than the sword. The Roman tongue is long banished from 2
Belgium and the Rhine; but if its splendour has anywhere survived, it is surely with you; our jurisdiction is fallen into decay along the frontier, but while you live and preserve your eloquence, the Latin language stands unshaken. As I return your greeting, my heart is glad within me that our vanishing culture has left such traces with you; continue your assiduous studies, and you will feel more surely every day that the man of education is as much above the boor as the boor in his turn above the beast. Were I to obey your wish and 3
send you a commentary on some part of the Scriptures, it would be sorry verbiage; you would do far better to direct your request to the clergy of your own district. They are venerable in years, approved in faith, known by works; they are ready in speech and tenacious in memory, my superiors in all sublimer gifts. Even if we leave out of the account the bishop of your city, a character of supreme perfection, blessed in the possession and repute of all the virtues, you may far more appropriately consult on any kind of problem the celebrated fathers of the Church in Gaul; Lupus and Auspicius are both within your reach, and however inquisitive you may be, you will not get to the bottom of a learning such as theirs. In any case, you must pardon me for disobeying you in this matter, and that not only out of

kindliness, but from simple justice; for if it is fair that you should escape from incompetence, it is equally right that I should avoid conceit. Farewell.

XVIII

To his friend Lucontius

c. A.D. 470

1 I FEAR you have a memory defective in the matter of others' requests but infallible in the matter of your own. It would be tedious to repeat all the promises of swift return which you and your family made to me and mine; not the smallest of them have you kept. Far from it, your flight was cunningly planned to make us think you were coming back for Easter; you took no heavy baggage out of town, neither carriage nor cart for luggage appeared in your train.

2 It is too late to complain of the trick you made the ladies play us, causing them to travel with only the lightest of effects, while you and our brother Volusianus were hardly escorted by a single client or attendant. By this device you cheated the friends who came to see you off with the delusive hope that they were soon to see you back. Certainly our good brother Volusianus deceived us by the pretence of a short trip, when in fact he was probably bound, not merely for his own estate at Baiocassium, but the whole second province 3 of Lyons into the bargain.[1] As for yourself, though you have broken faith by idling all this time away down there, you yet have the face to ask me for any poetical trifles I may have recently composed. I obey; but

simply because you deserve the rubbish you will get; the verses I am sending are so rustic and unfinished that no one would believe they came from town and not from the depths of the country. You must know that 4
Bishop Perpetuus,[1] a worthy successor of his great predecessor, has just rebuilt on a greater scale than before the basilica of the saintly pontiff and confessor Martin. It is said to be a great and memorable work, and all that we should expect when one such man does honour to another. For the walls of this church he has demanded of me the inscription you are now to criticize, and sure as he is of his place in my affection, he takes no denial in matters of this kind. Would I could think this offering 5
of mine would prove no blot upon the magnificence of that pile and its wealth of gifts; but I fear it must be so, unless some happy chance should lend its very defects a charm where all is of such perfection, just as a dark spot on a fair body is mocked at first, and then compels approval. But why should I dilate upon all this? Put down your shepherd's pipe, and give a supporting hand to this hobbling elegy of mine:

*'Over the body of Martin, venerated in every land, the body in which renown survives the life departed, there rose a structure meet for poor men's worship, and unworthy of its famous Confessor. Always a sense of shame weighed heavy on the citizens when they thought of the saint's great glory, and the small attraction of his shrine. But Perpetuus the bishop, sixth in line after him,[2] has now taken away the disgrace; he has removed the inner shrine from the modest chapel and

* Translated by Fertig, Part ii, pp. 37–8; and by Chaix, i. 329.

reared this great building over it. By the favour of so powerful a patron the founder's fame has risen together with the church, which is such as to rival the temple of Solomon, the seventh wonder of the world. That shone resplendent with gems and gold and silver; but this fane shines with a light of faith beyond the brilliance of all metals. Avaunt, Envy of the venomous tooth! be our forefathers absolved; may our posterity, however fond of its own voice, presume to add or alter nothing. And till the second coming of Christ to raise all people from the dead, may the fane of Perpetuus perpetually endure.'[1]

6 I send you, as you see, the most recent verses I can find. But if you persist in spinning vain delays, the concession will not stop me from shaking the stars with my complaints; nor, if the case requires it, shall I shrink from a resort to satire, and you will be very much mistaken if you imagine that I shall be as suave as in the verses you have had to-day. For it is a law of human nature that man is more telling, more fiery, and quicker on the mark in his censure than in his praise. Farewell.

XIX

To his friend Florentinus

(No indication of date)

You blame me for my delay and my silence. I can purge myself of both charges, for I am not only on my way, but as you see, I write as well. Farewell.

XX

To his friend Domnicius *

c. A.D. 470

You take such pleasure in the sight of arms and 1
those who wear them, that I can imagine your delight
if you could have seen the young prince Sigismer [1] on
his way to the palace of his father-in-law in the guise of
a bridegroom or suitor in all the pomp and bravery of the
tribal fashion. His own steed with its caparisons, other
steeds laden with flashing gems, paced before and after;
but the conspicuous interest in the procession centred
in the prince himself, as with a charming modesty
he went afoot amid his bodyguard and footmen, in
flame-red mantle, with much glint of ruddy gold, and
gleam of snowy silken tunic, his fair hair, red cheeks
and white skin according with the three hues of his
equipment. But the chiefs and allies who bore him 2
company were dread of aspect, even thus on peace
intent. Their feet were laced in boots of bristly hide
reaching to the heels; ankles and legs were exposed.
They wore high tight tunics of varied colour hardly
descending to their bare knees, the sleeves covering
only the upper arm. Green mantles they had with
crimson borders; baldrics supported swords hung from
their shoulders, and pressed on sides covered with cloaks
of skin secured by brooches. No small part of their 3
adornment consisted of their arms; in their hands they
grasped barbed spears and missile axes; their left sides
were guarded by shields, which flashed with tawny

* Translated by Hodgkin, ii. 364.

golden bosses and snowy silver borders, betraying at once their wealth and their good taste. Though the business in hand was wedlock, Mars was no whit less prominent in all this pomp than Venus. Why need I say more? Only your presence was wanting to the full enjoyment of so fine a spectacle. For when I saw that you had missed the things you love to see, I longed to have you with me in all the impatience of your longing soul. Farewell.

XXI

To his friend Aper

c. A.D. 472

1 In every genealogy the father's line must take precedence, yet we owe not a little to our mothers. For it hardly befits us to accord a lesser honour to her who bore, than to him who begot us. I leave the biologist the care of defining what we are or how we came into the world, passing on to the subject introduced by
2 these reflections. Your father is an Aeduan,[1] your mother comes from Auvergne. Aeduan, then, you are first and foremost, but yet not altogether. For remember the passage in Virgil[2] to the effect that Pallas is Arcadian, but at the same time Samnite. He might have qualified, as a foreigner, to lead the Etruscans against Mezentius, save only for the fact that through his Samnite mother he traced his descent in part to her country of Etruria. Here you have evidence of great moment from the greatest of authorities (unless, indeed, you believe poets false to facts even when they deal with history), that

the mother's country must count no less than that of the
father. Now if the Arvernians in their turn rightly claim 3
at any rate a half-share in you, pray give a patient hearing to the complaint of men who yearn for your presence, and now unburden the bosom-secret of a whole population through the lips of a single spokesman. Imagine them as standing before you and addressing you face to face. 'What is our offence, ungrateful fellow citizen, that all these years you shun the soil which nourished you as if it were an enemy's country? Here we tended your cradle, here we heard your infant cries and formed your tender limbs; it was our people who carried you in their arms. This was the country of 4
your grandsire Fronto, whose indulgence to you was equalled only by his own self-discipline, which our models of to-day might take as a model for themselves. This was the country of your grandmother Auspicia, who from a single heart after her daughter's death gave to the helpless orphan a devotion great enough for two. Your aunt was also of our land, and so was Frontina, the virgin holier than a nun, held by your mother in respect, by your father in veneration, and so ascetic and austere in her life, so perfect in God's faith and fear, that she inspired an awe in all men. It was here that our schools vied one with the other to perfect you in grammar and in rhetoric, when the time came for your initiation in the liberal arts, with such results that even by virtue of your education alone you cannot but think of Clermont with affection. I shall not recall to you 5
the unique charm of our land;[1] the broad main of tillage, where the profitable waters flow harmless through the crops, bringing rich increase; where the more the

industrious man traffics, the less he need fear shipwreck; the land which is easy to the traveller, fertile to the cultivator, to the hunter a perpetual joy; where pastures crown the hill-tops and vineyards clothe the slopes, where villas rise on the lowlands and castles on the rocks, forests here and clearings there, valleys with springs, headlands washed by rivers; the land, in short, of which a single glimpse suffices to make many a
6 stranger forget his own country. Need I remind you of the town which was always so devoted to you that you ought to find no society more agreeable than that of its nobility? You were received with open arms, and all were so delighted to have you with them that no one could ever see enough of you. Need I speak of your own property? the more you visit it the better it will make good your outlay. For the very expenses of a proprietor cultivating his own land contribute to the increase of his income. I unburden myself thus in the name of all our citizens, and certainly of the best among them. Such is the affection which they show, so high the compliment implied in their desire, that you may imagine the greater joy which will be yours if you assent to their request. Farewell.

XXII

To his friend Leo

A.D. 477

1 THE magnificent Hesperius, pearl of friends and glory of letters, informed me on his return from Toulouse not long ago that you wished me to begin writing history as soon as my volume of Letters is

completed. I need not tell you with what respect and gratitude I receive an opinion of such weight, and moreover so flattering to myself; for if you hold that I ought to abandon the work of smaller compass for the greater, it must be because you think me competent. But frankly, I find it easier to respect your judgement than to follow your advice. The task indeed is one which is worthy 2 of your recommendation, but it is no less worthy of your own practice. Tacitus long ago gave similar advice to Pliny and then anticipated his friend by following his own counsel. The precedent bears perfectly on your suggestion; for I am a mere disciple of Pliny,[1] whereas in the old historical style you excel Tacitus. Could he return to earth, could he witness your literary eminence and reputation, he would soon follow the hint conveyed by his own name. You, therefore, are 3 the man to shoulder the burden of your own proposal; you have an excellent gift of eloquence and to vast erudition you join unrivalled opportunities. For as adviser of a most potent sovereign, whose policy is concerned with all the world, you are admitted to the secrets of his business and his laws, his wars and treaties, you understand their local significance, their extent and their importance. Who, then, more fit to gird him for the task than he who is behind the great scene of public affairs, who knows the movements of the peoples, the embassies that pass between them, the generals' feats of arms, the treaties of the princes, who stands himself at such an altitude that he need neither suppress the truth nor broider the fabric of a lie?

How different is my own condition, afflicted with 4

the griefs of exile, deprived of the old facilities for study; a cleric, sworn to renounce ambition, and keep the middle path of his obscurity. My trust is no longer in the gifts of this present world, but in the hope of a world to come. My failing strength plays me false, and makes me delight in idleness; I care no more for the praise of my own generation, and as little
5 for that of men who shall come after me. History is the last field in which I should now pursue fame; we churchmen are ill-advised to publish our own affairs and rash to meddle with those of others; we record the past without advantage to ourselves, and the present from imperfect knowledge; we write what is untrue to our disgrace, and what is true at our peril. It is a work or subject in which the mention even of the virtuous wins a man scant credit, and of the great, unbounded enmity. Forthwith some hue and flavour of satire invades the historian's style, and this is wholly incongruous with our vows. Historical writing begins in spite, proceeds in weariness, and ends in ill repute.
6 Let a cleric once dabble in it, and all these woes will fall upon him; forthwith the viper's tooth of envy is into us; if our style be straightforward, we are called mad; if polished, we are presuming beyond our place.[1] But you can enter upon this province with a light heart; your fame allows you to spring from strength to strength. You will tread the neck of the detractor or lightly leap above it. None will have written in a more exalted vein than you, none so near the antique manner, even though your theme be the story of our own times. For as you were trained long since in the art of letters, and now are no less versed in that of

affairs, you have left the venomed fang no hold whatever on you. Therefore it is that in years to come your works will be consulted with advantage, heard with delight, and read with assurance of their authority. Farewell.

XXIII

To his friend Proculus

c. A.D. 472

YOUR son, whom I may almost call mine also, has 1
taken refuge with me, full of sorrow for having left you, overwhelmed with shame and repentance of his desertion. When I heard what he had done, I rebuked him for this truancy with sharp words and threatening looks. The voice was mine, but I spoke in your place; I denounced him as one whose proper meed was disinheritance,[1] the cross, the sack, and the other penalties of parricides. He flushed red in his confusion, but made no brazen excuses for his fault; and when I convicted him on every point, such floods of streaming tears accompanied his contrition that it was impossible to doubt his future amendment. I entreat you, there- 2
fore, to show mercy on one who now shows none to himself; imitate Christ and do not condemn him who admits that he deserves to be condemned. You may prove inexorable; you may subject him to unheard-of punishments; but no torture you can inflict will hurt him like his own remorse. Free him from his despairing fears; justify my confidence in you; relieve yourself from the secret anguish you must feel (if I know aught of a father's feelings) at the spectacle of

a son crushed by undisguised affliction. I shall only have done him harm if you lift a finger against him, which I trust you will not do unless you mean to remain as hard as rock and rigid as impenetrable
3 adamant. If I am right in expecting something better from your known character and warm heart, be indulgent and forgive; I pledge myself that, once reconciled, he will henceforward be a loyal son. To absolve him promptly of his fault is to bind me by a new obligation. I earnestly beg you to do more, and grant him instant pardon; I want you, when he returns, not to open him your door alone, but your heart as well. Great God! what a bright day will dawn for you, what joyous news it will be to me, what gladness will fill his soul, when he casts himself at his father's feet and receives from those injured lips, those lips of terrible aspect, not reproaches but a kiss! Farewell.

XXIV

To his friend Turnus *

A.D. 461–7

1 The Mantuan's lines suit perfectly your name and your affair:

> *Turnus, what never God would dare*
> *To promise to his suppliant's prayer,*
> *Lo, here, the lapse of time has brought*
> *E'en to your hands, unasked, unsought.*[1]

* Translated by Hodgkin, ii. 345.

You remember that a long time ago your father Turpio (he was then of tribune's rank) sought and obtained a loan of Maximus, an official of the Palatine Service; he assigned nothing as security or guarantee, either in money or land; there is only a document ensuring the creditor his twelve per cent.[1] This interest had been accumulating ten years, and had doubled the capital sum. When your father was grievously ill and 2
near his death, the public authority put serious pressure on him for the payment of the debt; the bailiffs too behaved in an intolerably brutal manner. I was then setting out for Toulouse, and the sick man, in despair, wrote entreating me to intercede with his creditor for at least a short delay. Of course I at once promised to do what I could, for Maximus and I are something more than acquaintances, and linked by old ties of hospitality. I therefore diverged from my route to pay him a visit, though his estate lies some miles distant from the highway.

On my arrival, he came out himself to meet me. 3
But how changed his walk from the old erect and rapid gait; how changed the old frank regard and hearty voice! His dress, his walk, his humility, his pallor, his mode of speech—all declared the churchman. And then his hair was short and his beard long; he had simple tripod seats; coarse Cilician hangings covered his doors[2]; the beds were featherless, the tables unadorned. His entertainment was as plain as it was kindly, with more vegetable than meat; if any richer dish appeared, it was brought not to him but to his guests. When we rose from table, I asked my neigh- 4
bours quietly to which of the three orders he belonged;

was he monk, clerk, or penitent? They told me he was so popular that his fellow citizens had thrust priestly office upon him against his inclination.[1] When morning came, and the servants and clients were busy catching the animals, I begged a private interview, which he at once granted. I began by congratulations on his new dignity which he had not expected, but my
5 petition followed close upon them. I preferred the prayer of our common friend Turpio; I urged his straits and his extremity; I told how much harder it seemed to the sick man's afflicted friends that his soul should be released from a body still held in the bond of debt. I implored him to remember his new calling and our ancient fellowship; I entreated him at least to accord delay, and so to moderate the barbarous importunities of the collectors, who were barking like dogs about a death-bed; I asked that if Turpio died, the heirs should be granted the respite of the mourner's year, and that if, as I hoped, he recovered health, he should be left in peace during the time of convalescence
6 from so exhausting a sickness. I had got thus far with my petition when this charitable soul began to weep copious tears, not for the delay in recovering his debt but for the peril of the debtor, and restraining his sobs, cried: 'Far be it from me, a cleric, to demand from a sick man what as an official I should hardly have brought myself to ask from a sound one. But I am so attached to my friend's children also, that, even should he die, I shall require of them not a penny more than the law of our friendship sanctions. You shall write to them in their anxiety, enclosing a letter from me to confirm the authority of yours. Assure them

that whatever be the issue of our brother's illness, (and may it prove a happy one!) I give them a whole year's respite; I will also remit that half of the debt represented by the accumulated interest, and content myself with the simple return of the loan.' On this, 7
I rendered thanks to God first, and then to my host, who so respected his good name and conscience; I assured this good friend that he laid up as a treasure in advance for himself what I was empowered to remit to you, and purchased a heavenly kingdom by refusing to drive a hard bargain here on earth. It now remains for you to use every effort for the repayment of the principal, and to return him heartfelt thanks in the name of your young brother and sister, who by reason of their tender age can know nothing of their own good fortune. There is no excuse for you to say, 'I am only a co-heir; the estate has not yet been divided; it is common knowledge that I have come off worse than the other two; my brother and sister are still minors; a husband has yet to be found for her, a guardian for him, and a surety for the guardian when appointed.' Such things are sometimes said with fairness to creditors, but only to the bad ones. You are fortunate in having to deal with a person ready to remit half your debt when he might exact the whole. Do not keep him waiting; he would be within his right if he demanded once more in his resentment all that his lenience had excused. Farewell.

XXV

*To his friend Domnulus**

c. A.D. 470

1 I CANNOT delay an hour in letting you know of an event which must cause you the greatest pleasure, anxious as you were to learn what success attended the piety and firmness of our metropolitan and father in Christ, Patiens, upon the occasion of his visit to Châlon. He went to ordain a bishop for that town, where discipline had been imperilled after the retirement and subsequent death of the young bishop Paulus. Some of the provincial bishops formed his escort; others had preceded him. When the Episcopal Council met, it found that the opinion of the citizens was not unanimous,[1] and that there existed private factions of the kind so ruinous to the public welfare.
2 The presence of three candidates aggravated these evils. The first had no moral qualification whatever, but only the privilege of ancient lineage, of which he made the most. The second was brought in on the applause of parasites,[2] bribed to support him by the free run of a gourmand's table. The third had a tacit understanding with his supporters, that if he attained the object of his ambition, the plundering of the
3 Church estates should be theirs. Seeing this, the holy Patiens and the holy Euphronius determined that no

* Partly translated by Guizot, *Hist. de la civilisation en France*, ed. 1846, i. 81–2.

thought of odium or popularity should move them from the firmness and severity of the saner judgement. They communicated their intention to their fellow bishops[1] in secret conclave assembled, before they made it public. Then, with a complete disregard of the unruly crowd, they suddenly joined their hands upon the holy John, a man conspicuous for an honourable, humane and gentle life, and without the faintest suspicion of what they proposed, or the slightest desire for preferment. This John was first a Reader, and 4
had been a server at the altar from his tender years. In course of time and strenuous duty he became archdeacon, in which office or rank his efficiency kept him back; they would not give him promotion because they did not wish to relieve him of functions he performed so well. Such was the man, a member only of the second order, on whom they laid their hands, to the perplexity of the factions, which had no acclamations ready for one never even put forward for the office, but dared not at the same time say anything against a man whom his own career acclaimed. So, to the stupefaction of the intriguers, the rage of bad citizens, and the delight of good, without one dissentient voice, they two consecrated their new colleague. And now, unless the 5
monasteries of the Jura[2] keep you, where you love to ascend as if in foretaste of a celestial habitation, this letter ought to reach you, bringing the happy news, how these our fathers and protectors opined in accord, or accorded in opinion—whichever you will. Rejoice too in his name whom Euphronius and Patiens consecrated, the one by testimony, the other by laying on of hands, the two together by their concurring judge-

ment; in all which events Euphronius acted as beseemed his age and the long tenure of his high office, Patiens, for whom no praise could ever be too high, as befitted one who by his ecclesiastical dignity is the first person in our city, and by the priority of the city, the first citizen in all the province. Farewell.

BOOK V

1

To his friend Petronius

A.D. 478

THEY tell me you devote patient but not un- 1
pleasant hours to the perusal of my Letters; you who have achieved mastery in studies of widest scope, can yet notice the most insignificant writings of another. This is great, and well becomes the enthusiast for letters. But you are repaid for it by the most perfect kind of fame; for he who is generous enough to praise other men's talent will not fail to find his own conspicuously acknowledged. I commend to you 2
my friend Vindicius, a man of piety, and admirably suited for the dignity of deacon which he has recently attained. I had no time to copy what you wanted from my tablets, as it was incumbent on me to do, so I have entrusted him with these trifling lines just to have something to send; but such is your kindness that you accept any letter of mine as if it were an exceeding great reward. Meanwhile I commend to 3
your notice the affair of this same bearer who is taken to your neighbourhood by a troublesome business in which he finds himself involved. Two possibilities lie before him: he may either enter peacefully upon an inheritance, or he may be entangled in legal proceedings.

His paternal uncle has died a bachelor and intestate, and he is taking steps to inherit as next of kin; but factious opposition may bar his way. Against each and every difficulty which may be raised, you, after Christ, are the suppliant's best hope; I am confident that if he finds favour in your sight, his cause will prove victorious. Farewell.

II

To his friend Nymphidius

c. A.D. 472

1 Claudianus Mamertus, the most accomplished of our Christian philosophers and the most learned man in the world, wrote not long ago a notable work in three volumes on the Nature of the Soul; in its embellishment and final elaboration he employed the method of the disposition and logical arrangement of profane philosophy, demonstrating that the nine Muses are not maidens at all, but Liberal Arts. The attentive reader discovers in his pages the real personified titles of the Nine, who of themselves and for themselves create their proper appellations. For in this book Grammar divides,[1] and Rhetoric declaims; Arithmetic reckons, Geometry metes; Music balances, Logic disputes; Astrology predicts, Architecture constructs; Poetry
2 attunes her measures. Pleased with the novelty of a theory like this, and kindled to enthusiasm by so much ripe wisdom, you had hardly seen the book before you asked to have it for a short time to examine and copy it and to make extracts; you promised to return

it quickly, and your request was granted as soon as made. Now, it is far from fitting that I should be deceived in this little matter, and that you should be the deceiver. It is high time for you to send the book back; if you liked it, you must have had enough of it by now; if you dislike it, more than enough. Whichever it be, you have now to clear your reputation. If you mean to delay the return of a volume for which I have to ask you, I shall think that you care more for the parchment than for the work. Farewell.

III

To [his kinsman] Apollinaris

A.D. 472

1 It was perhaps only fair that you should retaliate on my loquacious habits by applying the curb of taciturnity. But since in the exchange of kind offices a perfect friendship should dwell less on what it pays than on what it may still be held to owe, I shall loosen the rein of scruple and render you the impudent homage of another letter: of course the impropriety of this is proved by the fact of your continued silence. Do I not deserve to be informed of a brother's fortunes in time of war? Are you really afraid of revealing your hopes or apprehensions to a friend who is anxious on your account?

2 Your motive in keeping your doings from me can only be that you are not quite sure of me, and fear that I might not rejoice as I ought at news of your good luck, or properly lament your adverse fortunes. May such disloyalty find no place in gentle hearts; may so miserable a suspicion be no longer a blot on

the candour of a true affection! For, as your Crispus says, 'to desire and reject the same things, that is the making of firm friends.'[1]

3 I shall be content if I can hear that you are in good case. My own mind has been depressed by the weight of a troubled conscience; a violent fever brought me almost to death's door. As you know, the cares of an august profession have been imposed on me, unworthy though I am of such an honour. And it has been misery to me to have to teach what I have never myself learned, and to preach goodness before practising it; like a barren tree, I bear no fruit of good works, but scatter idle words like leaves.

4 And now pray for me that my future life may prove it to have been worth while to come back almost from the underworld; for now a continuance in past errors would make this renewal of life the beginning of my soul's destruction. You see that I hide nothing from you, and I may fairly ask in return how things fare with you. I have done the part of friendship; it remains for you to act as you think right. But remember that by God's grace we recognize no end to a comradeship which we gave our hearts to begin; it must be like laws of Attica, graven eternally on brass. Farewell.

IV

To [his kinsman] Simplicius

(No indication of date)

1 YOUR failure to answer my letter I impute to a friendship not beyond reproach, but in a greater

degree, to an uneasy conscience. For unless I do you an injustice, your answer is withheld less from perversity than from a sense of shame. But if you continue to close and bolt your door against my communications, I shall not be sorry to oblige you with the peace which you desire. At the same time I must tell you plainly that the instigators of the wrong thus done me are to be found among those nearest to you.

For it is no injustice to attribute all that is 2
hateful in your silence to the spoiled humours of your sons, who, secure in your affection, submit with impatience to my assiduity.[1] It is incumbent on you to admonish them by your parental authority to be more amiable henceforward in their behaviour, and so sweeten to me the bitterness of their past offence. Farewell.

V

To his friend Syagrius

(No indication of date)

THOUGH you descend in the male line from an 1
ancestor who was not only consul—that is immaterial—but also (and here is the real point) a poet, from one whose literary achievement would certainly have gained him the honour of a statue, had it not been secured for him already by his official honours,—witness the finished verse that he has left us; and though on this side of his activity his descendants have proved themselves no wise degenerate, yet here we find you picking up a knowledge of the German tongue with the greatest of ease; the feat fills me with indescribable amazement.

I can recall the thoroughness of your education 2

in liberal studies; I know with what a fervid eloquence you used to declaim before the rhetor. With such a training, how have you so quickly mastered the accent of a foreign speech, that after having your Virgil caned into you, and absorbing into your very system the opulent and flowing style of the varicose orator of Arpinum,[1] you soar out like a young falcon from the ancient eyrie[2]?

3 You can hardly conceive how amused we all are to hear that, when you are by, not a barbarian but fears to perpetrate a barbarism in his own language. Old Germans bowed with age are said to stand astounded when they see you interpreting their German letters; they actually choose you for arbiter and mediator in their disputes. You are a new Solon in the elucidation of Burgundian law; like a new Amphion you attune a new lyre, an instrument of but three strings. You are popular on all sides; you are sought after; your society gives universal pleasure. You are chosen as adviser and judge; as soon as you utter a decision it is received with respect. In body and mind alike these people are as stiff as stocks and very hard to form; yet they delight to find in you, and equally delight to learn, a Burgundian eloquence and a Roman spirit.

4 Let me end with a single caution to the cleverest of men. Do not allow these talents of yours to prevent you from devoting whatever time you can spare to reading. Let your critical taste determine you to preserve a balance between the two languages, holding fast to the one to prevent us making fun of you, and practising the other that you may have the laugh of us. Farewell.

VI

To [his kinsman] Apollinaris

A. D. 474–5

As soon as summer began to yield to autumn and 1
the fears of my Arvernians were in some degree moderated by the approach of winter, I was able to make a journey to Vienne. There I found, in great tribulation, your brother Thaumastus, who alike by virtue of his age and his descent inspires me with feelings of affection and respect. Afflicted already by the recent loss of his wife, he was no less troubled on your account, fearing that the gang of barbarians and officers about the court might trump up some malicious charge against you.[1]

According to his report, venomous tongues have 2
been secretly at work, whispering in the ear of the ever-victorious Chilperic, our Master of the Soldiery,[2] that your machinations are chiefly responsible for the attempt to win the town of Vaison for the new Emperor.[3] If you are exposed to any suspicion on this score, inform me at once by return, that we may not lose any possible advantage which might accrue from my presence or the exertion of my interest. If in your opinion a real danger exists, I shall make it my special business either by conciliating the royal favour, to ensure your safety, or by discovering the extent of the king's anger to make you see the need for greater caution in future. Farewell.

VII

To his [kinsman] Thaumastus

A.D. 474–5

1 At last we have discovered who the villains are who have accused your brother before our tetrarch for siding with the partisans of the new Emperor—unless, indeed, the stealthy steps of the informers have deceived the proved sagacity of our friends. They are the wretches, as you yourself have heard me say upon the spot, whom Gaul endures with groans these many years, and who make the barbarians themselves seem merciful by comparison. They are the scoundrels whom even the formidable fear. These are the men whose peculiar province it seems to be to calumniate, to denounce, to intimidate, and to plunder.

2 These are they who in quiet times make parade of their affairs, in peace of their ample spoils, in war of their evasions, over their cups of their victories. These are the creatures who will spin out a case if they are called in, and block its progress if they are kept out; who grow offensive if reminded of their duty, and if they once pocket your fee, forget their obligation. These are the fellows who buy themselves a lawsuit to sell their mediation; who control the appointment of arbitrators, dictate their sentence, and tear it up whenever it suits them to do so; who incite litigants to sue, and hold the hearing in suspense; who hale off the convicted, and force back into the court those who would fain escape by settlement. These are the men who, asked a favour opposed by none, will promise

with reluctance what shame forbids them to refuse, and moan if they have to keep their word.

These are they at whose appearance the world's 3
great scoundrels would confess themselves surpassed, Narcissus, Asiaticus, Massa, Marcellus, Carus, Parthenius, Licinus, Pallas, and all their peers.[1] These are they who grudge quiet folks their peace, the soldier his pay, the courier his fare, the merchant his market, the ambassador his gifts, the farmer of tolls his dues, the provincial his farm, the municipality its flamen's dignity, the controllers of revenue their weights, the receivers their measures, the registrars their salary, the accountants their fees, the bodyguards their presents,[2] towns their truces, taxgatherers their taxes, the clergy the respect men pay them, the nobles their lineage, superiors their seats in council, equals equality, the official his jurisdiction, the ex-official his distinctions, scholars their schools, masters their stipends, and finished pupils their accomplishments.

These are the upstarts drunken with new wealth 4
(I spare you no sordid detail), who by their intemperate use betray their unfamiliarity with riches. They like to march under arms to a banquet, they will attend a funeral in white, and wear mourning at a marriage festival; they go to church in furs,[3] and hear a litany in beaver. No race of men, no rank, no epoch is ever to their liking. In the market they behave like Scyths; in the chamber they are vipers, at feasts buffoons. While they are harpies in exaction, in conversation you might as well talk to statues, or address a question to brute beasts. In negotiation slow as snails, they are sharp as money-lenders at a contract. In comprehension

they are stones, in judgement stocks; swift as flame in anger, hard as iron in forgiveness, pards in friendship, bears in humour, foxes in deceit, overbearing as bulls, fierce as Minotaurs in destruction.

5 They believe in the unsettlement of affairs; the more troubled the time the firmer their faith in its advantage. Cowardice and a bad conscience destroy their nerves; they are lions in the palace and hares in camp; they dread treaties for fear of having to disgorge, and war for fear of having to fight. Let them but scent from afar a rusty purse, and you will see them fix on it the eyes of Argus, Briareus' hands, the Sphinx's claws; they will bring into play the perjuries of Laomedon, the subtleties of Ulysses, Sinon's wiles; they will stick to it with the staunchness of Polymestor and the loyalty of a Pygmalion.

6 Such are the morals with which they hope to crush a man both powerful and good. And what can one man do, encompassed on every side by slanderers whose venomous lips distort each word he says? What should he do when nature meant him for honest company, but fortune cast him among thieves whose evil communications would make Phalaris more blood-thirsty, Midas more covetous, Ancus vainer, Tarquin haughtier, Tiberius craftier, Gaius more dangerous, Claudius more slothful, Nero more corrupt, Galba more avaricious, Otho more reckless, Vitellius more prodigal, Domitian more ferocious?

7 But we have one consolation in our trouble; fair Tanaquil restrains our Lucumon:[1] she waits her chance, and rids his ears by a few coaxing words of all the poison with which the whisperers have filled them.

You ought to know that we owe it to her interest if up till now the mind of our common patron has not been poisoned against our brothers by these younger Cibyrates[1]; God willing, it never will be, while the present power holds Lyons for the German race, and our present Agrippina exerts her moderating influence on her Germanicus[2]. Farewell.

VIII

To his friend Secundinus

c. A.D. 477

WHAT a long time it is since we used to read your 1
masterly hexameters with outspoken admiration! Your verse was equally full of life, whether you were celebrating a wedding, or the fall of great beasts before the prowess of kings. But even you yourself would admit that you have never done anything better than your last poem in triple trochaics constructed in hendecasyllabic metre. What fine malice I found in it; what style, 2
what pungent eloquence! it was impossible for me to keep my enthusiasm to myself. As for your subjects, you were fearless; only the necessity for respecting persons seemed to check somewhat the lightning of your genius and the free course of your irony. I think the Consul Ablabius[3] never thrust more brilliantly at the family life of Constantine with a couplet, or gave more stinging point to the famous distich secretly appended to the palace gates:

'Who wants back Saturn and his golden age?
We have the diamond age—Neronian.'

You remember that, when this was written, Constantine had done to death his consort Fausta[1] in a hot
3 bath and his son Crispus with cold poison. I would not have you deterred by anything from your bold and vivid use of satire. You will find the flourishing vices of our tyrant-ridden citizens[2] a rich mine to exploit. For the folk whom we set down as fortunate according to the lights of our age or our locality comport themselves with such an arrogance that the future will not readily forget their names. The infamy of vice and the praise of virtue are both alike eternal. Farewell.

IX

To his friend Aquilinus

c. A. D. 477

1 I FIND it certainly to my advantage, friend capable of every virtue, and I trust you will feel the same, that we should have as many ties to bind us as we have reasons for being united. Such ties are hereditary in our families; I do but recall the experience of the past. Let me summon as my witnesses our grandfathers Rusticus and Apollinaris,[3] whom like fortunes and aversions united in a noble friendship. They had a similar taste in letters, their characters were alike; they had enjoyed similar dignities and undergone the same dangers. They were equally agreed in detesting the inconstancy of Constantine, the irresolution of Jovinus, the perfidy of Gerontius; both singling out the fault proper to each person, and both finding in Dardanus the sum of all existing vices.[4]

If we come down to the years between their time and 2
our own, we find our fathers brought up together from
their tender youth until they came to manhood. In
Honorius' reign,[1] as tribunes and secretaries, they served
abroad together in such close comradeship that among
all the grounds of their agreement the fact that their
own fathers had been friends appeared to be the least.
Under Valentinian, one of the two ruled all Gaul, the
other only a region of it; even so they managed to
balance their dignities with a fraternal equilibrium; the
one who held the lower rank had seniority in office.
And now the old tradition comes down to us grandsons, 3
whose dearest care it should be to prevent the affection
of our parents and our forefathers from suffering any
diminution in our persons. But there are ties of all
kinds, over and above that of this hereditary friendship,
which needs must bring us close together; we are
linked by equality of years no less than by identity of
birthplace; we played and learned together, shared the
same discipline and relaxation, and were trained by the
same rule. So then, for what remains of life now that 4
our years touch upon the threshold of age, let us under
the providence of God be two persons with but a single
mind; and let us instil into our sons the same mutual
regard: let us see that the objects which they desire and
refuse, pursue or shun, are the same. It would indeed
crown our vows if the boys who bear the honoured names
of Rusticus and Apollinaris renewed within their breasts
the hearts of those illustrious ancestors. Farewell.

X

To his friend Sapaudus

(No indication of date)

1 Among all the virtues of the illustrious Pragmatius, I place this first, that his enthusiasm for letters inspires him with an ardent admiration for you. He finds in you the last traces of the antique industry and accomplishment; and it is only right that he should show you favour, since few men owe a greater debt to litera-
2 ture than he. When he was a young man his persuasive eloquence won such applause in the schools of rhetoric, that Priscus Valerianus, himself reputed for his oratorical skill, made him his son-in-law, and adopted him into his patrician family. Besides his youth, his birth and means, Pragmatius had good looks, and an engaging modesty which enlisted people's sympathy. Even at that age he was of a serious disposition and felt the shame of making his way by a handsome face when he would have been better content to attract by his qualities of mind and character. And indeed a beautiful nature is the best key to men's hearts; bodily charm is transient; as years advance and life wanes, it falls away. When Priscus Valerianus was made Prefect of the Gauls, his opinion of his adopted son remained unaltered, indeed he clung to it with pertinacity. He associated him with himself in council-chamber and court, resolved that the accomplishments which had been admitted to share his family life should also share in the enhancement of his dignity.
3 Your own style is so admirable and lucid, that far from surpassing it, the great orators, with all their qualities, can

hardly attain its level—not the logical Palaemon, the austere Gallio, the opulent Delphidius, the methodical Agroecius, the virile Alcimus, the charming Adelphius, the rigid Magnus, the agreeable Victorius.[1] It is far from my desire to cajole or flatter you with this hyperbolic list of rhetors, but in my opinion only Quintilian in his force and his intensity, or Palladius with his splendid manner, can fairly be compared with you; and even that comparison I should not urge—I should merely yield it acquiescence. If after you 4
there shall be any other adept of Roman eloquence, he will be deeply grateful to that friendship with Valerianus, and if he is half a man, will long to be admitted as a third to your society. Such a wish could never prove a source of annoyance to you, since there are now, alas! so few who have any respect for polite studies. And it is a defect rooted and fixed in human nature, to think little of the artist when you know nothing of the art. Farewell.

XI

To his friend Potentinus

c. A.D. 467

I AM your devoted friend, and my devotion was born 1
neither of caprice nor error. Before I linked myself to you in close friendship, I pondered well; it is my habit to choose first, and give my heart afterwards. 'But what on earth', you will say, 'did you see to like in me?' I will answer gladly and in two words: 2
gladly, for you are my friend; briefly, because my space is small. What I respect in your career is this; you

do so many things that every reasonable man would like to imitate. You cultivate your estates as an expert; you build with the utmost method, you are an unerring hunter, your hospitality is perfection, your wit is of the first order, your judgements are absolutely fair; you are sincere in persuasion, very slow to wrath, very
3 quickly appeased, very loyal after reconciliation. I shall rejoice if when he grows up my young Apollinaris copies these several qualities; it shall not be for want of urging on my part if he fails. Let Christ but grant me success in my plans for his training and instruction, and it will not be my least satisfaction to have borrowed from your character the chief ensample of life which I set before him. Farewell.

XII

To his friend Calminius

A. D. 474

1 It is no foolish pride of mine, but this alien dominance which makes my letters so few and far between; do not expect me to speak out; your own fears, similar to mine, explain the need for silence. One thing, however, I may freely lament, that sundered as we are by this whirlwind of warring forces, we have practically no chance of meeting one another. Alas! your harassed country never sees you except when the alien's formidable command bids you hide yourself in armour, while we on our side are covered by our ramparts. At such time you are led against your native land, an unwilling captive,[1] to empty your quiver against

us while your eyes fill with tears. We bear you no ill will; we know that your prayers are otherwise directed than your missiles. But as from time to time, without 2
ratification of any treaty some semblance of a truce opens for us a casement on our darkness, bright with hope of liberation, I entreat you to let us hear from you as often as you can; for be sure that our besieged citizens preserve the kindliest thoughts of you and manage to forget the hateful part you play as their besieger. Farewell.

XIII

To his friend Pannychius *

A. D. 469

HAVE you heard that Seronatus[1] is coming back 1
from Toulouse? If you have not (and I hardly think you have), learn it from these presents. Evanthius is hurrying to Clausetia, making passable the parts of the road in the contractor's hands, and clearing it wherever it is choked with fallen leaves. When he finds any part of the surface full of holes, he rushes in a panic with spadefuls of soil and fills them with his own hands; his business is to conduct his monster from the valley of the Tarn, like the pilot-fish[2] that leads the bulky whale through shoals and rocky waters. But lo! the monster, 2
swift to wrath and slow to move by reason of his bulk, no sooner appears like a dragon uncoiling from his cave, than he makes immediate descent upon the pallid folk of Javols, whose cheeks are pale with fear. They had

* Translated by Hodgkin, ii. 338; and Fertig, i. p. 20.

scattered on all sides, abandoning their townships; and now he drains them dry by new and unparalleled imposts, or takes them in the mesh of calumny; even when they have paid their annual tribute more than once, he refuses to let these unhappy victims return to
3 their homes. The sure sign of his impending arrival in any district is the appearance of prisoners in troops, dragging their chains along. The anguish of these men is joy to him; their hunger is his food; and he finds his peculiar pleasure in subjecting them to ignominy before their sentence. He compels the men to grow long hair, and off cuts the hair of the women. If here and there a prisoner receives a pardon, it is through his vanity or his corruption, and never through his mercy. Not even the prince of orators or the prince of poets could describe so dire a creature: Marcus of Arpinum and Publius of Mantua would be impotent alike. This pest (whose treasons God confound!) is said to be now on his way; anticipate his onset by salutary precautions; if there is talk of suits, compound with the litigious enemy; provide yourself with guarantees against new imposts, and prevent this worst of men from compromising the affairs of worthy people by his favour or ruining them by his enmity. I will sum up in these words my opinion of Seronatus: others fear some crushing blow at the brigand's hands; to me his very benefits are suspicious. Farewell.

XIV

To his friend Aper

A. D. 472–3

ARE you taking your ease in your sunny Baiae,[1] 1
where the sulphurous water rushes from hollows of the porous rock, and the baths are so beneficial to those who suffer either in the lungs or liver? Or are you 'camped among the mountain castles',[2] looking for a place of refuge, and perhaps embarrassed by the number of strongholds you find to choose from? Whatever the cause of your delay, whether you are making holiday or going about your business, I feel sure that the thought of the forthcoming Rogations[3] will bring you back to town. It was Mamertus our father in God and 2
bishop who first designed, arranged, and introduced the ceremonial of these prayers, setting a precedent we should all revere, and making an experiment which has proved of the utmost value. We had public prayers of a sort before, but (be it said without offence to the faithful) they were lukewarm, irregular, perfunctory, and their fervour was destroyed by frequent interruption for refreshment; and as they were chiefly for rain or for fine weather, to say the least of it, the potter and the market-gardener could never decently attend together![4]
But in the Rogations which our holy father has instituted 3
and conferred upon us, we fast, we pray with tears, we chant the psalms. To such a feast, where penitential sighs are heard from all the congregation, where heads are humbly bowed, and forms fall prostrate, I invite you; and if I rightly gauge your spirit, you will only

respond the quicker because you are called in place of banquets to a festival of tears. Farewell.

XV

To his friend Ruricius

(No indication of date)

1 THE usual salutations over, I at once urge upon your notice the claims of our bookseller, because I have made discriminating and unbiased trial of the man, proving him to my complete satisfaction at once loyal in sentiment and alert in service to our common master—yourself. He brings in person the manuscript of the Heptateuch all written out by his own hand with the utmost neatness and rapidity, though I read it through myself, and made corrections. He also brings a volume of the Prophets; this was edited by him in my absence, and with his own hand purged of corrupt additions.[1] The scholar who had promised him assistance in reading out from another text, was only able to perform his task in part; I fancy illness prevented him from carrying
2 out his undertaking. It remains for you by encouragement or promise of your influence to show appropriate recognition of a servant who has done his best to satisfy, and deserves to succeed; and if this is in proportion to his arduous task, he will soon begin to look for his reward. All that I ask for the moment is your benevolence towards him; it is for you to decide what he deserves, though indeed I think the good opinion of his master is far nearer to his heart than any recompense. Farewell.

XVI

To [his wife] Papianilla *

A. D. 474

THE moment the Quaestor Licinianus, coming from 1
Ravenna, had crossed the Alps and set foot on Gaulish soil, he sent a message in advance to make it known that he was bearer of imperial letters patent conferring the title of Patrician on Ecdicius.[1] I know that your brother's honours delight you no less than my own; considering his years, he has attained this one very early; considering his deserts, very late. For he earned the dignity he is now to receive long ago, by service in the field and not by purchase; and though only a private citizen, poured into the treasury no mere contribution, but sums like spoils of war. Julius Nepos, true Emperor in character no less than 2
prowess, has done nobly in keeping the pledged word of his predecessor Anthemius that the labours of your brother should be recognized; his action is all the more laudable for the promptitude with which he has fulfilled a promise reiterated so often by another. In future the best men in the State will feel able, nay, rather, will feel bound, to spend their strength with the utmost ardour for the commonweal, assured that even should the prince who promised die, the Empire itself will be responsible, and pay the debt due to their devotion and self-sacrifice. Knowing your affectionate 3

* Translated by Hodgkin, ii. 346–8.

nature, I am convinced that even in the very midst of our adversities this news will bring great consolation, and that not even the imminent dread of siege will divert your mind from the path of a joy common to us all. For I am sure you were never quite so gratified by any of my own honours, in which you legally shared; good wife as you have always been, you are the best sister that man ever had. That is why I have not lost an instant in sending my letter of congratulation on this enhancement of dignity which Christ has permitted to your family. I satisfy alike your solicitude and your brother's modesty. He will be sure to say nothing of this promotion; but even if you did not know his unassuming nature, you would not blame him for lack of
4 brotherly feeling. As far as I am concerned, I derive great satisfaction from these new distinctions which you have awaited with unconcealed impatience; but I derive a greater yet from the brotherly union which exists between Ecdicius and myself. It is my ardent wish that our children and his may live in equal harmony; and I pray in our common name that just as we of this generation were born into prefectorian families, and have been enabled by divine favour to elevate them to patrician rank, so they in their turn may exalt the
5 patrician to the consular dignity. Little Roscia, our joint care,[1] sends you her love; she has the rare advantage of being brought up by her grandmother and her aunts, who temper their great indulgence with strictness, forming her character, yet not asking too much of her tender years. Farewell.

XVII

To his friend Eriphius *

A. D. 461–7

You are the same man still, my dear Eriphius; 1
the pleasures of the chase, the amenities of town or country are never allowed to lure you so far that in your hour the charm of letters will not win you back. That devotion it is which bids you tolerate even me, whom you are good enough to describe as redolent of the Muses. If you were in a frivolous mood when you wrote so, you jest at my expense; if in sober earnest, your regard for me has blinded your eyes, for it needs no demonstration to prove your judgement at fault. Really, you go much too far when you use of me expressions hardly appropriate to a Homer or a Virgil. I leave these kindly exaggerations, and pass to 2
the proper subject of my letter. You bid me send you the verses which I was weak enough to compose at the request of your most distinguished father-in-law, who understands the art of so living with his fellows as to command or obey with equal ease. Blame yourself if words run away with me, and I relate an insignificant event at greater length than it deserves; you insist on a picture of the scene and all that occurred, since your illness prevented you from being with us. We 3
had assembled at the tomb of S. Justus[1]; the annual procession before daylight was over, attended by a vast crowd of both sexes which even that great church

* The greater part translated by Guizot, *Hist. de la civilisation en France*, ed. 1846, i. 95–7; and by Fertig, Part ii, pp. 39–40.

could not hold with all its cincture of galleries. After Vigils were ended, chanted alternately by the monks and clerics, the congregation separated; we could not go far off, as we had to be at hand for the next service at Tierce, when the priests were to celebrate the Mass.
4 We felt oppressed by the crowding in a confined space, and by the great number of lights which had been brought in. It was still almost summer, and the night was so sultry that it suffocated us, imprisoned as we were in that steaming atmosphere; only the first freshness of the autumn dawn brought some welcome relief. Groups of the different classes dispersed in various directions, the principal citizens assembling at the monument of Syagrius, which is hardly a bowshot from the church. Some of us sat down under an old vine, the stems of which were trained trellis-wise and covered with leaves and drooping fronds; others sat on the
5 grass odorous with the scent of flowers. The talk was enlivened with amusing jests and pleasantries; above all (and what a blessed thing it was!), there was not a word about officials or taxes, not an informer among us to betray, not a syllable worth betrayal. Every one was free to tell any story worth relating and of a proper tenor; it was a most appreciative audience; the vein of gaiety was not allowed to spoil the distinct relation of each tale. After a time, we felt a certain slackness through keeping still so long, and we voted for some
6 more active amusement. We soon split into two groups, according to our ages: one shouted for the ball, the other for the board-game, both of which were to be had. I was the leader of the ball-players; you know that book and ball are my twin companions. In the other

group, the chief figure was our brother Domnicius, that most engaging and attractive of men: there he was, rattling some dice which he had got hold of, as if he sounded a trumpet-call to play. The rest of us had a great game with a party of students, doing our best at the healthful exercise with limbs which sedentary occupations made much too stiff for running. And now the illustrious Filimatius 7
sturdily flung himself into the squadrons of the players, like Virgil's hero 'daring to set his hand to the task of youth'[1]; he had been a splendid player himself in his younger years. But over and over again he was forced from his position among the stationary players by the shock of some runner from the middle, and driven into the midfield where the ball flew past him, or was thrown over his head; and he failed to intercept or parry it.[2] More than once he fell prone, and had to pick himself up from such collapses as best he could; naturally he was the first to withdraw from the stress of the game in a state of internal inflammation, out of breath from exercise and suffering sharp pains in the side from the swollen fibres of his liver. Thereupon 8
I left off too. It was done from delicacy; if I stopped at the same time, my brother would be spared a feeling of mortification at being so soon exhausted. Well, while we were sitting down, he found himself in such a perspiration that he called for water to bathe his face. They brought it, with a shaggy towel which had been washed after yesterday's use, and had been swinging on a line worked by a pulley near the doors of the porter's lodge. As Filimatius was leisurely drying 9
his cheeks, he said: 'I wish you would dictate a pair

of couplets in honour of a cloth which has done me such a noble turn.' 'Very well,' I replied. 'But you must get my name in,' he rejoined. I said that there would be no difficulty in that. 'Dictate away, then.' I smiled; 'I would have you know', I said, 'that the Muses are upset if I frequent their company before witnesses.' At this he burst out in his explosive but delightful way (you know his ardent nature, and what an inexhaustible flow of wit he has): 'Beware, my lord Sollius! Apollo may be still more upset if you tempt his pupils to secret interviews all alone.' You can imagine the applause aroused by a retort as
10 neat as it was instantaneous. I wasted no more time, but called up his secretary, who was at hand with his tablets, and dictated the following epigram:

'At dawn, or when the seething bath invites, or when the hot chase beads the brow, may goodly Filimatius with this cloth cherish his face till all the perspiration flows into the thirsty fleece.'

Our good friend Epiphanius the secretary had hardly taken down the lines, when they came to tell us that our time was up, and that the bishop was leaving his
11 retreat; we therefore rose to go. You must not be too critical of verses written thus to order. It is another matter with the longer poem which some time ago you two asked me to write in a hyperbolical and figured style on the man who bore good fortune ill.[1] I shall send it off to-morrow for your private revision. If you both approve of it, you can then publish it under your auspices; if you condemn, you can tear it up and forgive me as best you can. Farewell.

XVIII

To his friend Attalus

(No indication of date)

I WAS delighted to hear that you have consented to preside over the destinies of Autun.[1] I am glad for several reasons; first, you are my friend; second, you are a just man; third, you are not to be trifled with; fourth, you will be quite near us. You will now have not only the inclination to help our people and further their affairs, but the duty and the power of doing so. In my satisfaction at seeing an old acquaintance invested with new authority, I am already looking round for objects on which you may exercise your benevolence. For understand, I feel so sure of it, that if I fail to find anything to ask for, I shall expect you to make me a suggestion yourself. Farewell.

XIX

To his friend Pudens

c. A. D. 472

THE son of your nurse has eloped with the daughter 1
of mine. It is a shameful action, and one which would have destroyed our friendly relations, had I not learned at once that you knew nothing of the man's intention. But though you are thus acquitted in advance, you yet do not scruple to ask that this crying offence should be allowed to go unpunished. I can only agree on one condition: that you promote the ravisher from his original servile state, by changing your relation to him

2 from that of master to that of patron. The woman is already free; but she will only be regarded as a lawful wife instead of a mere concubine if our criminal, whose cause you espouse, ceases to be your dependant and becomes your client, assuming the status of a freeman in place of that of a *colonus*.[1] Nothing short of these terms or these amends will in the least condone the affront. I only yield to your request and your protestation of friendship on condition that, if as ravisher he is not to be bond to Justice, Liberty shall make him a free bridegroom. Farewell.

XX

To his friend Pastor

A. D. 461–7

1 YOUR absence from yesterday's business of the Municipal Council[2] is thought by most to have been intentional; they suspect that you wished to avoid the burden of an embassy which might be laid upon your shoulders. I congratulate you on being so eligible a person as to live in constant fear of being elected. Your efficiency commands my applause, your prudence my admiration, your happy fortune my congratulations;
2 in fine, I wish no better lot than yours to every friend I love as well. Many men are possessed by a detestable thirst for popularity; you see them take the chief citizens by the hand, lead them aside from a meeting, and embrace them in a corner, promising good offices for which no one asked; you see them, in the hope of nomination as public envoys, refusing the usual travelling-

allowance,[1] and insisting on going at their own charges; secretly canvassing every member in turn, so that when the council meets, they may be sure of a unanimous and public invitation. The consequence is that though 3 people are pleased enough to be served for nothing, they find it in the long run pleasanter to choose a more modest representative, even at the cost of paying all expenses; the self-assertion of the volunteer becomes too irksome, even though his tenure of office throws no burden on the town. Since, then, the intentions of our best citizens are now no secret to you, acquiesce, and meet their wishes; you have given proof enough of modesty; test the warm feelings of those who invite you. Your failure to appear was put down to your discretion; a repetition of such conduct would expose you to the charge of indifference. Remember, too, that if you do 4 go to Arles, you will be able to greet your venerable mother and your affectionate brothers on the way; you will greet the natal soil that returns love for love, and is doubly delightful when unexpectedly revisited. Then think how convenient it will be to see your agent, and to get even a passing glimpse of your own home, your vines, your olives, your cornfields, and the house itself. Though our envoy, you will yet be travelling for your own pleasure; altogether, this journey on city business should suit you admirably, and you will be able to thank the community for an excellent chance of getting a sight of your own people. Farewell.

XXI

To his friends Sacerdos and Justinus

(No indication of date)

Your uncle Victorius, whose varied learning and eminence we so revered, always wrote with power, especially when he wrote verse. As you know, I too have been the servant of the Muses from my youth up. You are your uncle's heirs no less in merit than in law. But by right of poetry I am as much his kin as you by right of blood; we ought all of us, therefore, to share in the succession according to our several affinities. So keep the property for yourselves, but hand the poems over to me. Farewell.

BOOK VI

I

To the Lord Bishop Lupus *

A. D. 472

BLESSED be the Holy Spirit and Father of Almighty 1
God that we have you, father of fathers, bishop of bishops and the second James of your age,[1] to look down upon every member of the Church from the eminence of your charity, as it were from another Jerusalem exalted high as the first; you, the consoler of all the feeble, the counsellor of all men, whose trust you so well deserve. And what answer can I make to one thus venerated, I who am as vile dust foul with sin? Suffering deep need of your salutary 2
converse, yet standing in great awe, I am driven by the memory of my guilty life to cry to you, as once that great colleague of yours cried to the Lord: 'Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.'[2] But if my dread is not tempered by love, I fear that I may be abandoned like the Gerasenes, and that you may go forth from my borders. Rather, for my greater profit, will I seek to bind you with the conditional prayer of that other leper: 'If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;'[3] in which words he both declared his need and published abroad his faith. For though you are beyond 3

* Translated by Chaix, i. 449; and Germain, p. 103 f.

all doubt first of all bishops in the wide world; though even the throng of your colleagues submits to the prerogative which you enjoy, and trembles at your adverse judgement; though the hearts of the oldest among them are as the hearts of little children compared with yours; though your hard vigils in the spiritual warfare at Lerins,[1] and the nine lustres passed in your apostolic see have made you a veteran honoured in the camps of the Church, and the captain of our vanguard whom every soldier acclaims—yet you never hesitate to leave the first line awhile and those who fight before it; you do not despise camp-follower and servant, but to the meanest of the baggage-train, who for their ignorant simplicity still sit beside the loads of the flesh, you carry the standard of the cross which you have borne so long, and to their stricken souls extend the Word, as it were
4 a hand of rescue. They say, dear veteran leader, that you gather to you even the enemy's wounded, sounding the retreat from Sin to Christ after the manner of a consummate trumpeter, and like the Shepherd of the Gospel feel more joy over those who abandon the way of despair than over those who have never left the path of safety. O norm of all right conduct, column of all virtues, and (if a sinful man may dare to praise) fount of sweetness, truest because most holy, you did not shrink from touching with the finger of exhortation the sores of a most despicable worm; you did not grudge the food of admonition to a soul frail and fasting, or from the store-house of your deep love refuse me the measure of
5 the humility I am now to pursue. Pray for me, that I may know at length how vast the burden is that weighs upon my shoulders. Wretched man that I am, by the

continuance of my transgressions brought to such a pass, that I must now intercede for the sins of the people—I for whom their own supplications, more innocent than mine, should hardly obtain the divine mercy. How shall a sick man give others medicine? How shall one in a fever presume to feel a pulse that beats more strongly than his own? What deserter has the right to sing the praise of military science? What lover of high living is fit to read a lecture to the abstemious? Yet I, the unworthiest of men, must preach what I cannot practise. Condemned out of my own mouth when I do not fulfil my own injunctions, I must daily pronounce sentence upon myself. But if like a new Moses, not less, but of a later age, you intercede before Our Lord, with whom you are daily crucified, for all the multitude of my sins, I shall not living descend further into hell, nor longer, inflamed by the incentives of carnal sin, light alien flame on the altar of the Lord. For one guilty as I, there can be no glory to weigh down the scale; how abundantly shall I then rejoice if your prayers avail to restore my inward man, not indeed to perfect health and its reward, but to the healing of the heart's wounds, and pardon. Deign to keep me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

II

To the Lord Bishop Pragmatius

A. D. 472

THE venerable matron Eutropia, known to me as 1
a woman of the most exemplary merit, is in the greatest trouble. Frugality and charity dispute her days; her

fastings feed the poor; so watchful is she in Christ's service, that sin is all in her which she allows to slumber. But as if the sorrow of her widowhood were not enough, she now finds herself threatened with a lawsuit. Her first instinct in her two-fold affliction is to obtain the perfect remedy of your consolation; if you only see her, she will be equally grateful, whether you regard her coming as a short
2 journey or as a lasting proof of her respect. Now Eutropia is being harassed by the subtleties, to use no harsher word, of our venerable brother the presbyter Agrippinus. He is taking advantage of her woman's inexperience, and continually troubling the serene surface of her spiritual nature by windy gusts of worldliness. And all the while this poor woman is bleeding from two fresh wounds which time has added to the old deep wound of widowhood; for her son was first taken from her, and very soon afterwards her
3 grandson also. I did my best to compose this matter; a friendship of long standing gave me an old claim to be heard, and my sacred calling a new one; I let them know what I thought; I used persuasion where I could, and entreaty at every turn. You may be surprised to learn that throughout the woman and not the man was the first to accept suggestions for agreement. And though the father boasts that in his paternal quality he is in the best position to serve his daughter's interests, the daughter herself prefers her mother-in-law's most
4 generous proposals.[1] The dispute, only half appeased, is now to be carried before you. Pacify the adversaries by your episcopal authority, show their suspicious souls the truth, and bring about a reconciliation. You

may take my word for it that the holy Eutropia will count it almost victory if even at the cost of heavy sacrifices she can escape from litigation. Though two families are parties to the quarrel, I fancy you will soon decide which of them deserves the name of quarrelsome. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

III

To the Lord Bishop Leontius

A. D. 472

You have not yet seen fit to encourage my first steps 1
in our sacred profession, or to pour the rain of heavenly doctrine on the drought of my worldly ignorance; but I do not so far forget myself as to expect an equipoise in the courtesies which we render to each other. I am of small account; you are easily above me in years, in seniority, in the precedence enjoyed by your see,[1] in your wide learning, in the treasure of your righteousness; if I expected you to notice every letter, I should deserve no notice at all. I therefore make no imputation against 2
your silence; these lines merely introduce the bearer, and give me the excuse for sending them. If on this journey he can only have the assurance of your prompt favour, a broad harbour of safety will be open to his affairs. His business relates to a will. He does not know the importance of his own documents; the object of his expedition is to get the advice of skilled counsel. He will think it the next best thing to winning his case if it is proved to be lost on its merits; his one desire is to avoid the charge of negligence, and of not sufficiently

protecting family interests. My request on his behalf is simply this, that if the lawyers will not deign to give him proper advice, you should exert the authority of your sacred office[1] to extract it from them without delay. Deign to keep me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

IV

To the Lord Bishop Lupus

c. A. D. 472

1 I RENDER you the observance always due to the incomparable eminence of your apostolic life, still always due, however regularly paid. But I have a further object, to commend to your notice a long-standing trouble of the bearers, in whose case I have recently become interested. They have journeyed a great distance into Auvergne at this unfavourable season, and the journey has been undertaken in vain. A female relative of theirs was carried off during a raid of the Vargi,[2] as the local bandits are styled. They received trustworthy information, and following an old but reliable clue, discovered that some years ago she had been brought here
2 before being removed elsewhere. As a matter of fact, the unfortunate woman had been sold in open market before their arrival, and is now actually under the roof and the control of my man of affairs. A certain Prudens, rumoured to be now resident in Troyes, had attested the contract for the vendors, whose names are unknown to us; his signature is to be seen on the deed of purchase as that of a suitable witness of the transaction. By the fortunate fact of your presence, you

will be able, if you think fit, to see the parties confronted, and use your personal influence to investigate the whole course of the outrage. I gather from what the bearers say, that the offence is aggravated by the death of a man upon the road as a sequel to the abduction. But as 3
the aggrieved parties who wish to bring this scandalous affair to light are anxious for the remedy of your judgement and for your neighbourly aid, it seems to me that it would no less become your character than your position to bring about an equitable arrangement, thus affording the one side some comfort in affliction, and saving the other from an impending danger. Such a qualified decision would be most beneficial to all concerned; it would diminish the misery of one party and the guilt of the other, while it would give both of them a greater feeling of security. Otherwise, in regions and times like these of ours, the last state of the dispute may well prove no better than the beginning. Deign to keep me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

V

To the Lord Bishop Theoplastus

(No indication of date)

WHOEVER bears a letter of introduction from me to you unconsciously does my business; by conveying my dutiful regards at the proper moment, he renders me a service at least as great as that which he considers himself to receive. This is the case with the venerable Donidius, who is deservedly to be numbered among the

most admirable of mankind. I now recommend to you his client and servants, who have undertaken this journey for the benefit of their patron and master. Pray take the weary travellers under your protection; do all you can to help them by your support, your hospitality, and your intercession. And if our good friend, through inexperience and unfamiliarity with public affairs, should in any matter betray his inefficiency, consider the cause of an absent man, rather than the personality of his representative. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VI

To the Lord Bishop Eutropius

A. D. 472

1 As soon as I learned that the treaty-breaking nation [1] had withdrawn within its borders, and that travellers were in no further danger of insidious attack, I held it a disgrace to delay the presentation of my respects, for fear your friendship might grow rusty from my neglect, like a sword which is not properly kept bright. My sole object in sending this letter is to satisfy my anxiety as to your health and the success of your affairs; it is my hope that neither the distance which divides us nor the long intervals between our meetings may ever diminish the friendship once accorded me; it is the homes of men which the Creator confines within narrow limits,
2 not their mutual affections. And now I hope your Beatitude will feed my starving ignorance with sharp

and salutary discourse; your exhortations have a way of causing mystic increase and spiritual growth in the emaciated inward man. Deign to hold me in your remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VII

To the Lord Bishop Fonteius

A. D. 472

If a previous friendship between the older members 1
of two families helps the younger in their turn to know each other better, then indeed by virtue of such pre-existing ties I enjoy a great advantage in now seeking your Lordship's more intimate acquaintance. I well remember how powerful a patron in Christ you always were to my family, so that I regard myself less as making a new acquaintance, than as renewing an old one. I will add that the title of bishop imposed on my extreme unworthiness[1] compels me to seek the covert of your intercession, that the gaping wounds of a seared conscience may at least be closed by your healing prayers. While, therefore, I commend to you 2
myself and those who are dear to me, at the same time apologizing for not writing sooner, I implore you to sustain my first steps as a novice in this office by those availing supplications for which you are so widely renowned. So shall I owe all to your mediation, if the immutable mercy of God deign but to change the wickedness of this heart of mine. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VIII

To the Lord Bishop Graecus

c. A. D. 472

1 The bearer of this is one who ekes out a bare living by commerce; he gains no profit or other advantage from any handicraft or employment, nor does he make anything from the cultivation of land. He has come to be favourably known as an agent and trader; but a good name is all he gets; the pecuniary advantage goes to others. Though his means are small, the general confidence in him is so great that if he wants to raise money for the purchase of a cargo, people are confiding enough to trust him on no greater security than their experience of his good faith. It is true that I only learned these facts while actually writing these lines, but that does not make me hesitate to assert them with some assurance, for the sources of the information are common acquaintances of his and mine. I recommend him to you, then, on the ground of his youth and the arduous life he has led. As his name is now entered in the roll as Reader, you will see that I have had to give him in addition to an ordinary introduction as citizen, a canonical letter[1] as a clerk. I think I am right in looking forward to his brilliant success as a merchant if he is quick to take advantage of your patronage; but he must definitely prefer the fount of commerce to the icy springs of a municipal career.* Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

* The passage is corrupt.

IX

To the Lord Bishop Lupus

c. A. D. 472

THE bearer Gallus, made an honest man by return- 1
ing at once to his wife as he was bidden, conveys my greeting in this letter, and by doing so proves the efficacy of your own. For when I opened your missive in his presence, he was seized with instant compunction, and saw in it not so much a communication for me as a condemnation of himself. The result was that he immediately promised to go back, made his preparations at once, and was off without delay. At sight of so rapid a repentance, I could not confine myself altogether to rebuke; I gave him a few words of consolation, for so spontaneous an amendment is the next best thing to unbroken innocence. A man with 2
a perfect conscience could hardly have done more, always supposing him to keep within the range of your admonishment; for even such words of gentle censure as I read out to him are in themselves a most powerful incentive to reform. What, indeed, could be more valuable than a reprimand aiding the sick mind to discover within itself a remedy which the sharp reproach of others could never find? It remains for me to ask 3
a place in those frequent prayers by which you so mightily triumph over every kind of vice; that as the Wise Men of the Gospel returned to their own country by a different way, so by a new way of life you may lead me home to the land of the blessed. I had almost forgotten to mention the point which I

could least have afforded to omit. Convey my thanks to the respected Innocentius for so promptly obeying your injunctions. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

X

*To the Lord Bishop Censorius**

A. D. 473

1 The bearer is one privileged to hold the rank of deacon. Flying with his family from the whirlwind of the Gothic devastations, he was carried, as it were by the sheer momentum of his flight, into your territory. Immigrant and destitute as he was, he hurriedly sowed a half-tilled plot on Church lands in your holiness's diocese, and now begs permission to take the whole harvest for himself. The poor fellow is a stranger whose means are as narrow as his outlook; but if you treat him with the indulgence often granted to the humbler among the faithful, that is, if you remit him the glebe dues,[1] he will think he has done as well as if he were yet at work upon his native soil. If only you show him the liberality usually accorded to the faithful, and abandon your strictly lawful claim on his most exiguous crop, he will be full of gratitude, and set off home royally furnished for the road. Should you take the opportunity of his return to send me one of your usual gracious letters, all the brethren, and I myself, will regard it almost as a letter fallen from heaven. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

* Translated by Hodgkin, ii. 371.

XI

To the Lord Bishop Eleutherius

c. A.D. 472

I HEREWITH commend a Jew[1] to you, not because I approve a sect pernicious to those involved in its toils, but because we ought to regard none of that creed as wholly lost so long as life remains to them. For while there is any possibility of converting them, there is always a hope of their redemption. The nature of his business will be best explained by himself when admitted to your presence; for it would be imprudent to allow discursive talk to exceed the brevity proper to a letter. In the transactions and the disputes of this present world, a Jew has often as good a cause as any one; however much you may attack his heresy, you can fairly defend him as a man. Deign to hold us in remembrance, my Lord Bishop. 1 2

XII

*To the Lord Bishop Patiens**

A.D. 474

ONE man deems happiness to consist in one thing, a second in another;[2] my own belief is that he lives most to his own advantage who lives for others, and does heaven's work on earth by pitying the poverty and misfortune of the faithful. You may wonder at what I aim in these remarks. At yourself, most blessed father, for my sentiments refer especially to you, 1

* Partly translated by Fertig, Part ii, p. 24.

who are not content to succour only the distress which lies within your cognizance, but push your inquiries to the very frontiers of Gaul, and without respect of persons,
2 consider each case of want upon its merits. Does poverty or infirmity prevent a man from making his way to you in person? He loses nothing; your free hand anticipates the needs of those whose feet are unable to bring them to you. Your watchful eye ranges over other provinces than your own; the spreading tide of your benevolence bears consolation to the straitened, however far away. And so it happens that you often wipe tears from eyes which you have never seen, because the reserve of the absent touches you no less than
3 the plaints of those near at hand. I say nothing of your daily labour to relieve the need of your impoverished fellow countrymen, of your unceasing vigils, your prayers, your charity. I pass over the tact with which you combine the hospitable and the ascetic virtues, so that the king[1] is never tired of praising your breakfasts and the queen your fasts. I omit your embellishment of the church committed to your care until the spectator hardly knows which to admire most, the new fabric which you erect, or the old which you
4 restore. I do not mention the churches that rise in so many districts under your auspices, or the rich additions to their ornaments. I dismiss the fact that under your administration the faithful are increased and multiplied, while heretics alone diminish. I shall not tell how your apostolic chase for souls involves the wild Photinians[2] in the spiritual mesh of homily; or how barbarians once converted by your eloquence pursue your track until, like a thrice-fortunate fisher of men, you

draw them up at last out of the profound gulfs of error. It may be true that some of these good deeds are 5
not peculiar to you, and are shared by colleagues; but there is one which is yours, as lawyers say, as a first charge, and which even your modesty cannot deny; it is this, that when the Gothic ravages were over, and the crops were all destroyed by fire, you distributed corn to the destitute throughout all the ruined land of Gaul at your own expense, though it would have been relief enough to our starving peoples if the grain had come to them, not as a free gift, but by the usual paths of commerce. We saw the roads encumbered with your grain-carts. Along the Saône and Rhône we saw more than
one granary which you had entirely filled. The legends 6
of the heathen are eclipsed; Triptolemus must yield his pride of place, whom his fatherland of Greece deified for his discovery of corn; Greece, famed for her architects, her sculptors and her artists, who consecrated temples, and fashioned statues, and painted effigies in his honour. A doubtful story fables that this son of Ceres came wandering among peoples savage and acorn-fed, and that from two ships, to which poetry later assigned the form of dragons, he distributed the unknown seed. But you brought supplies from either Mediterranean shore, and, if need were, you would have sought them among the cities of the Tyrrhenian sea; your granaries filled not two paltry ships, but the basins of two great rivers. If you dis- 7
approve, as unsuited to your profession, a comparison drawn from the Achaean superstition of Eleusis, I will recall instead the historic prescience of the patriarch Joseph, who by his foresight provided a remedy for the famine which had to follow the seven lean years; I omit

for the moment his mystic and typical significance.[1] But I hold that man morally as great, who copes with a similar disaster without any warning in advance.
8 I cannot exactly tell the sum of gratitude which all the people owe you, inhabitants of Arles and Riez, Avignon, Orange, Viviers,[2] Valence, and Trois Châteaux[3]; it is beyond my power to count the total thanks of men who were fed without having to count out a penny. But for the city of Clermont I can speak, and in its name I give you endless thanks; all the more, that your help had no obvious inducement; we did not belong to your province; no convenient waterway led to us, we had no money to
9 offer. Measureless gratitude I give you on their behalf; they owe it to the abundant largess of your grain that they have now their own sufficiency once more. If now I have properly fulfilled the duty entrusted to me, I will cease to be the mouthpiece of others, and speak out of my own knowledge. I would have you know that your glory travels over all Aquitaine; all pray for your welfare, their hearts go out to you in love and praise, in longing and loyal devotion. In these evil times you have proved yourself a good priest, a good father, and as good as a good year to men who would have deemed it worth while to risk starvation if there had been no other means of discovering the measure of your generosity. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

BOOK VII

I

To the Lord Bishop Mamertus

A. D. 474

RUMOUR has it that the Goths have occupied Roman 1
soil; our unhappy Auvergne is always their gateway on every such incursion. It is our fate to furnish fuel to the fire of a peculiar hatred, for, by Christ's aid, we are the sole obstacle to the fulfilment of their ambition to extend their frontiers to the Rhône, and so hold all the country between that river, the Atlantic, and the Loire. Their menacing power has long pressed us hard; it has already swallowed up whole tracts of territory round us, and threatens to swallow more. We mean to resist with 2
spirit, though we know our peril and the risks which we incur. But our trust is not in our poor walls impaired by fire, or in our rotting palisades, or in our ramparts worn by the breasts of the sentries, as they lean on them in continual watch. Our only present help we find in those Rogations[1] which you introduced; and this is the reason why the people of Clermont refuse to recede, though terrors surge about them on every side. By inauguration and institution of these prayers we are already new initiates; and if so far we have effected less than you have, our hearts are affected equally with yours. For it is not unknown to us by what portents and 3

alarms the city entrusted to you by God was laid desolate at the time when first you ordained this form of prayer. Now it was earthquake, shattering the outer palace walls with frequent shocks; now fire, piling mounds of glowing ash upon proud houses fallen in ruin; now, amazing spectacle! wild deer grown ominously tame, making their lairs in the very forum. You saw the city being emptied of its inhabitants, rich and poor taking to flight. But you resorted in our latter day to the example shown of old in Nineveh, that you at least might not discredit the divine warning
4 by the spectacle of your despair. And, indeed, you of all men had been least justified in distrusting the providence of God, after the proof of it vouchsafed to your own virtues. Once, in a sudden conflagration, your faith burned stronger than the flames. In full sight of the trembling crowd, you stood forth all alone to stay them, and lo! the fire leapt back before you, a sinuous beaten fugitive. It was miracle, a formidable thing, unseen before and unexampled; the element which naturally shrinks from nothing, retired in awe
5 at your approach. You therefore first enjoined a fast upon a few members of our sacred order, denouncing gross offences, announcing punishment, promising relief. You made it clear that if the penalty of sin was nigh, so also was the pardon; you proclaimed that by frequent prayer the menace of coming desolation might be removed. You taught that it was by water of tears rather than water of rivers that the obstinate and raging fire could best be extinguished, and by firm faith the
6 threatening shock of earthquake stayed. The multitude of the lowly forthwith followed your counsel, and this

influenced persons of higher rank, who had not scrupled to abandon the town, and now were not ashamed to return to it. By this devotion God was appeased, who sees into all hearts; your fervent prayers were counted to you for salvation; they became an ensample for your fellow citizens, and a defence about you all, for after those days there were neither portents to alarm, nor visitations to bring disaster.

We of Clermont know that all these ills befell your people of Vienne before the Rogations, and have not befallen them since; and therefore it is that we are eager to follow the lead of so holy a guide, beseeching your Beatitude from your own pious lips to give us the advocacy of those prayers now known to us by the examples which you have transmitted. Since the Con- 7
fessor Ambrose discovered the remains of Gervasius and Protasius, it has been granted to you alone in the West to translate the relics of two martyrs—all the holy body of Ferreolus, and the head of our martyr Julian, which once the executioner's gory hand brought to the raging persecutor from the place of testimony.[1] It is only fair, then, in compensation for the loss of this hallowed relic, that some part of your patronage should come to us from Vienne, since a part of our patronal saint has migrated thither. Deign to hold us in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

II

*To the Lord Bishop Graecus**

c. A.D. 472

1 You overwhelm me, most consummate of all bishops, by the praises showered on any unpolished lines which I happen to write. Short though my first letter was, I wish I could acquit myself of blame for having told you a whole string of things irreconcilable with fact; the truth is that a crafty traveller imposed upon my innocence.[1] Ostensibly a trader, he persuaded me to give him a canonical letter[2] as Reader; and this ought certainly to have contained some statement of his indebtedness to others. For it appeared, on subsequent inquiry, that by the generosity of the people of Marseilles, he set out better equipped than one so moderately favoured in birth and fortune had reason to
2 expect. It makes quite a good story, if I only wielded a pen able to do justice to its humours. But as you have asked me for a long and diverting letter, permit me to relate the manner in which this messenger of ours exploited the hospitality of your city. It shall be told in a light vein, but I shall be careful to say nothing to offend the severity of your ears. You will see that on this occasion I really do know the man whom I introduce to your notice for the second time. Usage permits a writer to find his subject-matter wherever he can; why, then, should I go far afield, when the man who is to bear my letter can himself provide the theme of it?

* The greater part translated by Hodgkin, ii. 328–30. Cf. VI. viii above.

The bearer, then, is a native of Clermont, born of 3
humble but free parents, people who made no pretence of social standing, but were above all fear of degradation to the servile state, and satisfied with means, moderate indeed, but unencumbered and amply sufficient for their needs; it was a family which had chiefly held offices under the Church, and had not entered the public service. The father was a most estimable man, but not free-handed with his children; he preferred to serve his son's advantage, instead of ensuring him pleasant times in his youth. The result was, that the prisoner escaped to you a little too lightly equipped; and this was no small impediment at the outset of his adventure, for a light purse is the heaviest encumbrance on a journey. Nevertheless he made his first entry 4
into your city under the most favourable auspices. Your predecessor St. Eustachius received him with a two-fold blessing in word and deed. He wanted a lodging; one was forthcoming without difficulty on the prelate's commendation. He rented the rooms in due form, entering on his tenancy without delay, and at once set about making the acquaintance of his neighbours by saluting them as often as possible and being civilly greeted in return. He treated all as befitted their several ages; respectful to the old, he was always obliging those of his own years. He was consistently temperate and moral, show- 5
ing qualities as admirable as they are rare at his time of life. He was assiduous in paying court to your chief personages, and even to the Count of the city himself; alive to every chance, he began by receiving nods, went on to acquaintance, and ended in intimacy. By this systematic cultivation of important friendships, he

rapidly got on in the world; the best people competed for his company. Every one wished him well; there were plenty to offer him good advice. Private individuals made him presents, officials helped him by their influence. In short, his prospects and his resources
6 rose by leaps and bounds. It chanced that near the house where he lodged there resided a lady whose disposition and income were all that he could have desired; she had a daughter, not quite marriageable, but no longer a child. He began to attract the girl by pleasant greetings, and by giving her (as, at her age, he quite properly could) the various trifles and trinkets which delight a maiden's fancy; by such light links he succeeded in closely attaching her heart to his own.
7 Time passed; she reached the age of marriage. You already guess what happened. This young man, without visible relations or substance, a foreigner, a minor who had left home without his father's leave or knowledge, demands the hand of a girl equal to himself in birth, and superior in fortune. He demands, and, what is more, he obtains; he is recognized as suitor. For the bishop actively supported his Reader, and the Count encouraged his client; the future mother-in-law did not trouble to investigate his means; the bride approved his person. The marriage contract was executed, and some little suburban plot or other at Clermont was put into settlement and read out
8 with much theatrical parade. This legal trick and solemn swindle once over, the pauper lover carried off the wealthy bride. He promptly went into all his wife's father's affairs, and got together some nice little pickings for himself, aided all through the imposture by

the credulity of his easy-going and free-handed mother-in-law; then, and not till then, this incomparable charlatan sounds the retreat and vanishes into Auvergne. After he had gone, the mother thought of bringing an action against him for the absurd exaggerations in the contract. But it was rather late for her to begin lamenting the exiguity of his settlement, when she was already rejoicing at the prospect of a wealth of little grandchildren. It was with the object of appeasing her that our Hippolytus went to Marseilles when he brought you my first letter of introduction.

That is the story of this accomplished young man, as 9
good in its way as any out of Attic Comedy or Milesian fable. Excuse the excessive length of my letter; I have dwelt upon every detail that you might be fully informed in regard to the person whom your generosity has made a citizen of your town; and besides, one naturally has a kindly feeling for those in whom one has taken active interest. You will prove yourself in everything the worthy successor of Eustachius if you expend upon his clients the personal interest he would like to have been able to bequeath them, as you have already paid his relations the legacies mentioned in his will.

And now I have obeyed your commands to the full, 10
and talked to the limit of my obligation; remember that one who imposes on a man of small descriptive powers a subject calling for great detail, must not complain if the response betrays the gossip rather than the skilled narrator. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

III

To the Lord Bishop Megethius

AFTER A.D. 472

1 I HAVE considered long and carefully whether I ought to send you those short treatises of mine,[1] for which you ask. It required thought, though my affectionate desire to please you strongly prompted me at once to comply; but at last I have decided in your favour, and forward what you want. Is not this a great proof of docility? great indeed; but of impudence a yet greater. It is almost as bad as bringing water to a river, or wood to a forest; as audacious as offering a pencil to Apelles, 2 a chisel to Phidias, or a mallet to Polyclitus. I beg you, therefore, venerable friend, you whose sanctity is only equalled by your eloquence, to pardon the presumption which submits to your critical judgement these products of an irrepressible pen. I am always writing, though I publish very little; much as a dog will keep on snarling, though he may never break into an open bark. Deign to keep me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

IV

To the Lord Bishop Fonteius

AFTER A.D. 472

1 I AM getting quite afraid of introducing people to you, for whereas I only give them words, you give them presents, as if it were not already the height of privilege for a man to leave my sinful company for a conversation

so holy as yours. I cite in evidence my friend Vindicius, who is so laden with your generous gifts that he has returned by slower stages than he went, proclaiming everywhere that high as your repute may be, supreme as your position, your true title to praise lies less in your high office than in the voluntary respect of men. He dilates upon your piety, upon the sweetness and 2
affable charm of a familiarity never too familiar; he declares that your episcopal dignity in no way suffers, and that in you the priestly character, like a tall tree, may bend but is never broken. After hearing all these eulogies I shall never be quite happy until God suffers me to clasp in my close presumptuous embrace a heart so wholly stayed upon Him. For I will make 3
you a small confession. I can admire a man of an austere nature, and because I am very conscious of my own weakness can even tolerate harsh treatment from him; but I feel that one only submits to people of such temperament, one cannot really like them. In my opinion, the man who is always stern to those about him had best be very sure that his conscience is good enough to justify his pride; and for myself, I prefer to take as my model one who knows how to attract the devotion even of those who live leagues away. Great 4
as your other good deeds have been, nothing that I have heard delights me more than the news that the stream of your episcopal favour flows, with your unceasing prayers, towards the true lords of my heart, Simplicius and Apollinaris. If this be true, I pray that your kind deeds may never have an end; if false, that they may have immediate beginning. I commend the bearer to your notice. A troublesome business has

arisen for him at Vaison,[1] which the weight of your revered authority can doubtless bring to a favourable issue. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

V

To the Lord Bishop Agroecius

A.D. 472

1 A PUBLIC resolution of the citizens has called me to Bourges. The reason for the summons is the tottering condition of the Church, which has just been widowed of her bishop; members of both orders have been intriguing for the vacant see, just as if some bugle had sounded for the fray. The people are excited, and divided into factions; while only a few are ready to propose others, there are many who do not so much propose as impose themselves. To a man determined, as far as in him lies, to obey God and keep fast the truth, everything here seems frivolous, unstable, and sophisticated; one might say that the only genuine
2 thing left is impudence. You may think these laments exaggerated; but I scarcely hesitate to affirm that there are many here who harbour thoughts so rash and ruinous that they are ready to offer ready money for this holy see and all its dignity; the sale might before now have been effected in open market if the greed of the would-be purchasers had found response in vendors equal in audacity. I entreat you, therefore, to crown my hopes by giving me the honour of your presence under the same roof, and lending my diffidence, my

embarrassment, and my inexperience the shelter of your high protection.

At a time of such perplexity, do not refuse your 3
help in healing the dissensions of the people of Aquitaine; it is true that you are at the head of the Sénonais, but that is of small consequence; though we live in different provinces, we are bound by a single religious bond. Besides, Clermont is the last of all the cities in Aquitanica Prima [1] which the fortune of war has left to Rome; the number of provincial bishops is therefore inadequate to the election of a new prelate at Bourges, unless we have the support of the metropolitans. Rest assured that I have in no way encroached 4
on your prerogatives. As yet I have neither nominated, summoned, nor preferred a candidate; I have left the matter absolutely intact for your decision. All that I take upon myself is to invite you hither, to await your good pleasure, to acquiesce in your opinion, and when the throne is filled, to render the proper deference to your commands. I do not for a moment suspect that 5
any bad adviser will dissuade you from acceding to this request; but should that prove to be the case, you will hardly acquit yourself of blame, though it is easy to find reasonable excuses for not undertaking so long a journey. On the other hand, your coming will prove that though there may be limits to your diocese, your brotherly love is without bounds. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VI

To the Lord Bishop Basilius

A. D. 472–3

1 God has permitted us to give this generation a new example of what old friendship means; ours indeed is an attachment of long duration, and equal strength upon both sides. But our respective positions are by no means equal: you are the patron and I the client; perhaps, indeed, I presume too far in saying even so much. For so great is my unworthiness, that even the proven efficacy of your intercession can hardly
2 make good my backsliding. Because you are doubly my lord and master, firstly as my protector, secondly as my friend; because I so well remember (was I not by?) the flow of your eloquence, springing from that fervent zeal of yours, when you pierced with the point of your spiritual testimonies Modaharius the Goth as he brandished the darts of Arian heresy against you; because of all this, I need fear no charge of disrespect towards other pontiffs when I pour into your ears my grief at the ravages of the great wolf of our times, who ranges about the ecclesiastical fold battening upon lost souls, and biting right and left by
3 stealth and undetected. For that old enemy begins by threatening the shepherds' throats, knowing it the best way to ensure his triumph over the bleating and abandoned sheep. I am not so far oblivious of my own career as to ignore that I am one whose conscience has yet to be washed clean by many tears; but by God's grace my foulness shall at last be cleared away

with the mystic rake of your intercession. But since consideration for the public safety must come before everything, even a man's sense of his own unworthiness, I shall not hesitate to proclaim the cause of truth, disregarding all insinuations about my vanity, or doubts as to the sincerity of my faith. Neither a saint like you 4
can fitly here discuss, nor a sinner like myself indict, the action of Euric [1] the Gothic king in breaking and bearing down an ancient treaty to defend, or rather extend by armed force the frontiers of his kingdom. It is the rule here below, for Dives to be clothed in purple and fine linen, and for Lazarus to bear the lash of sores and poverty. So long as we walk in this allegoric land of Egypt, it is the rule that Pharaoh shall go with a diadem on his head, and the Israelite with the carrier's basket. It is the rule that while we are burned in the furnace of this symbolic Babylon we must sigh and groan like Jeremiah for the spiritual Jerusalem, while Assur thunders in his royal pomp and treads the Holy of Holies beneath his feet. Yet when 5
I compare the transient joys of this world with those which are to come, I find it easier to endure calamities which no mortal may escape. For, firstly, when I consider my own demerits, all possible troubles seem lighter than those which I deserve; and then know well that the best of cures for the inward man is for the outward man to be threshed by the flails of suffering. I must confess that formidable as the 6
mighty Goth may be, I dread him less as the assailant of our walls than as the subverter of our Christian laws. They say that the mere mention of the name of Catholic so embitters his countenance and heart

that one might take him for the chief priest of his Arian sect rather than for the monarch of his nation. Omnipotent in arms, keen-witted, and in the full vigour of life, he yet makes this single mistake—he attributes his success in his designs and enterprises to the orthodoxy of his belief, whereas the real cause lies
7 in mere earthly fortune. For these reasons I would have you consider the secret malady of the Catholic Church that you may hasten to apply an open remedy. Bordeaux, Périgueux, Rodez, Limoges, Javols, Eauze, Bazas, Comminges, Auch, and many another city are all like bodies which have lost their heads through the death of their respective bishops. No successors have been appointed to fill their places, and maintain the ministry in the lower orders of the Church; the boundaries of spiritual desolation are extended far and wide. Every day the ruin spreads by the death of more fathers in God; so pitiful is her state, that the very heresiarchs of former times, to say nothing of contemporary heretics, might well have looked with pity on peoples orphaned of their pontiffs and oppressed
8 by desperation at this catastrophe of their faith. Diocese and parish lie waste without ministers. You may see the rotten roofs of churches fallen in, the doors unhinged and blocked by growing brambles.[1] More grievous still, you may see the cattle not only lying in the half-ruined porticoes, but grazing beside altars green with weeds. And this desolation is not found in country parishes alone; even the congregations of
9 urban churches begin to fall away. What comfort remains to the faithful, when not only the teaching of the clergy perishes, but their very memory

is lost out of mind? When a priest departs this life, not merely the holder of the sacred office dies, but the office itself dies with him, unless with his failing breath he gives his blessing to a successor.[1] What hope remains when the term of a man's life implies the end of religion in his parish? If you examine more closely the ills of the body spiritual, you will soon perceive that for every bishop snatched from our midst, the faith of a population is imperilled. I need not mention your colleagues Crocus and Simplicius, removed alike from their thrones and suffering a common exile, if different punishments. For one of them laments that he cannot see whither he is to return; the other that he sees only too clearly where he is to return no more. You for your part have about you the most holy 10
bishops Faustus, Leontius, and Graecus, environed by the city, your order and their fraternal love. To you these miserable treaties are submitted, the pacts and agreements of two kingdoms pass through your hands.[2] Do your best, as far as the royal condescension suffers you, to obtain for our bishops the right of ordination in those parts of Gaul now included within the Gothic boundaries, that if we cannot keep them by treaty for the Roman State, we may at least hold them by religion for the Roman Church. Deign to bear me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VII

*To the Lord Bishop Graecus**

A. D. 474–5

1 HERE is Amantius[1], the usual bearer of my trifles; off once more to his Marseilles, to bring home a little profit out of the city, if he is fortunate in his business at the port. I could use the opportunity of his journey to gossip gaily on, if a mind that bears a load of sorrow could at the same time think of cheerful things. For the state of our unhappy region is miserable indeed. Every one declares that things were better in war-time than they are now after peace has been concluded.
2 Our enslavement was made the price of security for a third party; the enslavement, ah! the shame of it! of those Arvernians who by old tradition claimed brotherhood with Latium and descent from the sons of Troy;[2] who in our own time stood forth alone to stay the advance of the common enemy; who even when closely beset so little feared the Goth that they sallied out against his leaguer, and put the fear of their valour into his heart.[3] These are the men whose common soldiers were as good as captains, but who never reaped the benefit of their victories: that was handed over for your consolation, while all the crushing burden of defeat they had to bear themselves. These are the patriots who did not fear to bring to justice the infamous Seronatus[4], betrayer of imperial provinces to the barbarian, while the State for which they risked

* Partly translated by Fertig, Part ii, p. 16.

so much had hardly the courage on his conviction to carry out the capital sentence. And this is to be our 3
reward for braving destitution, fire, sword, and pestilence, for fleshing our swords in the enemy's blood and going ourselves starved into battle. This, then, is the famous peace[1] we dreamed of, when we tore the grass from the crannies in the walls to eat; when in our ignorance we often by mistake ate poisonous weeds, indiscriminately plucking them with livid hands of starvation, hardly less green than they. For all these proofs of our devotion, it would seem that we are to be made a sacrifice. If it be so, may you live to blush 4
for a peace without either honour or advantage. For you are the channel through which negotiations are conducted. When the king is absent, you not only see the terms of peace, but new proposals are brought before you. I ask your pardon for telling you hard truths; my distress must take all colour of abuse from what I say. You think too little of the general good; when you meet in council, you are less concerned to relieve public perils than to advance private fortunes. By the long repetition of such acts you begin to be regarded as the last instead of the first among your fellow provincials.[2] But how long are 5
these feats of yours to last? Our ancestors will cease to glory in the name of Rome if they have no longer descendants to bear their memory. Oh, break this infamous peace at any cost; there are pretexts enough to your hand. We are ready, if needs must, to continue the struggle and to undergo more sieges and starvations. But if we are to be betrayed, we whom force failed to conquer, we shall know beyond

a doubt that a barbarous and cowardly transaction was inspired by you.

6 But it little avails to give the rein to passionate sorrow; you must make allowance for us in our affliction, nor too nicely weigh the language of despair. The other conquered regions have only servitude to expect; Auvergne must prepare for punishment. If you can hold out no help in our extremity, seek to obtain of Heaven by your unceasing prayers that though our liberty be doomed, our race at least may live. Provide land for the exile, prepare a ransom for the captive, make provision for the emigrant. If our own walls must offer an open breach to the enemy, let yours be never shut against your friends. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VIII

To the Lord Bishop Euphronius

A. D. 472

1 I AM now held in the bonds of my clerical duty, but I should regard my undistinguished position as a veritable blessing if only the walls of our cities were as near as the borders of their territories. If that might only be, I should consult your holiness[1] on all things small and great; my activities would flow like a placid and untroubled stream, could they but rise from your converse as from a life-giving spring. They should never know the froth of vain conceit, or the turbid course of pride, or the muddiness of a bad conscience, or the falls of headstrong youth; if defilement and corruption were found in them, they should

be washed clean by the clear vein of your counsel. But alas! the distance that divides us prevents the 2
fulfilment of these desires; I therefore beg you to send a representative to advise on a perplexing question which has arisen here. The inhabitants of Bourges demand the consecration of the admirable Simplicius as their bishop; I want your decision in the matter. Your consideration for me, and your authority over others, are such that you need never press your views; you have simply to indicate your will, which is sure to coincide with justice. I must tell 3
you that of Simplicius all good is spoken, and by the best men in the city. At first I was inclined to view this testimony with little favour; it seemed to me to suggest favouritism. But when I observed that his rivals could find nothing better to do than to hold their tongues, especially those of the Arian persuasion; when I saw that no irregularity could be alleged to his discredit, though he is only a candidate and not yet in orders, I came to the conclusion that a man against whom the bad citizen could say nothing and on whose behalf the good could never say enough must be regarded as almost a perfect character. But how foolish 4
I am to make these comments, as if I were giving advice in place of asking it! The clergy will act in accordance with the decision contained in your letter; the people will acclaim it in the same spirit. We are not altogether irrational; we should not have decided to secure, if possible, your present aid, or if not, your advice, unless we had made up our minds to follow your counsel in all things. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

IX

*To the Lord Bishop Perpetuus**

A. D. 472

1 YOUR ardour for religious books has given you a most intimate acquaintance with everything written for the Catholic faith, whether by the Canonical authors or by the controversialists. You are even curious about productions unworthy the honour of your attention; for instance, you now wish me to send a copy of my public address delivered in the church at Bourges, an oration without the orthodox rhetorical divisions, or emphasis,
2 or figures of speech to lend it a proper style and dignity. It has none of the qualities of a finished eloquence; the weight of historical allusion, the enrichment of poetical quotation, the sparkling points of dialectic had all to be abandoned. I was distracted by the rancorous intrigues of the various factions; my mission occupied all my time; the abuses before my eyes were the one and only subject for my pen. So great was the company of the competitors, that two benches would not have held the candidates for the single vacant throne. And every one of these was as pleased with himself as he was critical of all his rivals.

3 If the people had not grown reasonable, and subordinated their judgement to that of the bishops, there would have been little chance of effecting anything. As it was, one saw small groups of priests whispering together in corners, though not a word was uttered

* Partly translated by Guizot, *Histoire de la civilisation en France*, ed. 1846, pp. 84 ff.

openly, most of them being just as afraid of their own order as of every other. The result was that every one was suspicious of his neighbour; all were induced to hear our proposals without too much difficulty, and afterwards to explain them in their turn to others.

Here, then, I append the address. It was written in 4
two vigils of a single summer night, under no eyes but those of Christ; my haste is, I fear, too obvious from internal evidence for you to need my assurance that it existed.

ADDRESS.*

Secular history relates, beloved brethren, that a certain 5
philosopher [1] used to teach new pupils the discipline of keeping silence before the art of speaking. They had to sit through five mute years listening to the disputations of their fellow students echoing all round them, and not even the quickest brains were allowed to anticipate the proper hour of recognition. When, after that long repression these pupils spoke at last, the audience could not repress applause; for until the mind is steeped with knowledge there is less credit in displaying what you know than in holding your peace on things of which you are ignorant. Far other is the position of the indifferent 6
orator who now addresses you. While he yet walked among lamentable pitfalls and wallowing-places of sin, the heavy charge of the sacred calling was laid upon him; and without ever having himself rendered a disciple's duty to a master of repute, he has himself to play the teacher of other men. That task is in itself impossible enough; it is made heavier by the diffidence

* Translated by Chaix, ii. 26 ff.

which I feel at having been selected by your decretal letter [1] to choose you a bishop, while all the time I see before me a saintly prelate [2] worthy of the highest of pontifical thrones, one who stands at the head of his province, and is my superior in everything, in experience, in training, in eloquence, in prestige, in seniority, and in years. Speaking thus as a junior and provincial bishop, before one metropolitan on the election of another, I am doubly embarrassed by my lack of qualification, and by the odium of presumption which
7 I may well incur. The responsibility, however, rests on you, since you have been rash enough to impose upon one deficient in wisdom the task of finding you, with God's aid, a bishop wiser than himself, and combining in a single person a host of different virtues: you must be well aware that honourable though the task may be, it is yet more clearly onerous. I would have you in the first instance reflect to what a crushing burden of criticism you subject me, requiring a perfected judgement from a beginner, and right guidance from one who hitherto has shown you nothing but his fallibility. Since, however, this has been your will, I entreat your prayers, that I may really become all that you now suppose me to be, and that if I am to be exalted to the skies, it may be not by your plaudits but by your supplications.

8 But first you ought to know on what Scylla-rocks [3] of slander, on what barking mouths (alas! that they should be human) I have been driven by the tempestuous fury of those who seek to bring you into discredit. Evil manners have this power: they allow the offences of the few to disfigure the innocence of the multitude,

whereas the good are too rare to communicate their virtues to the many, and so to palliate their crimes.

If I name a monk to you, were his austerities to 9
rival those of a Paul, an Antony, a Hilarion, or a Macarius, my ears will at once be deafened by the confused outcries of ignoble pygmies who will object in these terms: 'The man you nominate is trained not for a bishop's but for an abbot's work, and better fitted to intercede for souls before the celestial Judge than for their bodies before the judges of this world.' Now who could keep his patience, hearing singleness of heart besmirched by such imputation of imaginary defects? If 10
we choose one distinguished for humility, he will be called an abject; if, on the other hand, we propose a man with self-respect, he will be set down as arrogant; if our choice be one of small learning, his ignorance will make him fair game; if he be erudite, he will be declared conceited. If he is austere, all will shrink from an inhuman creature; if indulgent, they will blame his lenience. If he is simple, he will be an oaf; if clever, a sly fellow. Is he diligent? he must be superstitious. Is he easy-going? he stands convicted of negligence. Does he love a quiet life? he is a coward. If our candidate is abstemious, he becomes a skinflint; if charitable with hospitality, a glutton; if with fasting, one vain of his austerities. A free 11
manner will argue vice; a modest one contemptible rusticity. They mislike the stern man for his severity, and depreciate the affable for making himself cheap. And so, whichever of two virtues may adorn his life, he will be caught on the two-barbed hook of the malicious tongues whose points pierce all good qualities. Besides

all this, the people in their perversity, and the clergy in their love of licence, are equally averse from the idea of monastic discipline.

12 If, instead of a monk, I take a member of the secular clergy, his juniors will be consumed with a jealousy which his seniors will openly express. For among the clergy there are not a few—I may say this without offence to the rest—in whose eyes seniority counts before merit; they would like us to consider age alone and disregard efficiency, as if mere length of life were the one qualification for the highest office in the priesthood, and the prerogative, the amenity and charm of personal accomplishments were to count for nothing. On this principle a few individuals strive to direct the Church, though they are so old that they will soon need direction themselves—persons remiss in ministration, prompt in obloquy, indolent in affairs, busy in faction, weak in charity, sturdy in intrigue, steady in feud, vacillating in judgement.

13 Enough: I will not stigmatize the many for the machinations of a few; I only add this, that I shall mention no names. Whoever looks aggrieved proclaims his own discomfiture. I may freely admit that the multitude surrounding me to-day includes many of episcopal ability. But then, all cannot be bishops. Every man of them may be satisfied with his own particular gifts, but none has gifts to satisfy us all.

14 Suppose I were to nominate one who had followed an administrative career, I can imagine the storm of disapproval: 'Sidonius was transferred to the Church out of the great world, and because of this is reluctant to accept a cleric as metropolitan; he looks down on

every one from the height of his distinguished birth and the great offices he has held; he despises Christ's poor.' Now therefore, in fulfilment of the trust imposed upon 15
me, not so much through the esteem of the well disposed as through the suspicions of the slanderous (Almighty God liveth, the Holy Spirit, who by the voice of Peter condemned Simon Magus[1] for thinking to buy for gold the glory of the blessing), I testify that in the man whom I have chosen as suited for your needs I have considered neither money nor influence; I have weighed to the last scruple every circumstance affecting his own person; the times in which we live, the respective needs of city and province, and I decide that the man most fitted for this office is he whose career I shall now briefly relate.

He is Simplicius, on whom a blessing already rests. 16
Hitherto a member of your order, but henceforth of ours, if God approve him through your voices, he answers by conduct and profession, so well satisfying the claims of both, that the State will find in him one to admire and the Church one to love. If birth is still to com- 17
mand respect, as the Evangelist teaches (for St. Luke, beginning his eulogy of St. John,[2] considers it of the highest moment that he sprang from a line of priestly tradition, and exalts the importance of his family before celebrating the nobility of his life), I will recall the fact that his relatives have presided alike over the Church and the tribunal. His family has been distinguished in either career by many bishops and prefects; it had become almost their hereditary privilege to administer the divine and human laws. If we scrutinize rather 18
more narrowly his personal qualifications, we shall

find him conspicuous among the most respected. You may say that the illustrious Eucherius and Pannychius stand higher; they may have been so regarded, but on the present occasion they are excluded by the canon, because each of them has married again. Turning to his age, we find that he has at once the vigour of youth and the caution of maturity; comparing his talents with his acquirements, we see nature and learning
19 rivalling each other. If we ask whether he is given to hospitality, we find him generous to a fault, lavishing his substance on all men small and great, whether they are clerics, laymen, or strangers, and entertaining those most of all who are least likely to return his kindness. When an embassy had to be undertaken, more than once he has represented his city before barbaric kings in furs, or Roman emperors in purple. If you ask from what master he learned the rudiments of the faith, I will make the proverbial response: 'the source
20 of knowledge flowed for him at home.'[1] Lastly, let us not forget, beloved brethren, that this is he whom the barbarians held in darkness and duresse, and for whom God flung wide the prison gates with all their bolts and bars. This is the man whom, if report be true, you yourselves once with a single voice called to the priesthood before his father-in-law or father; but he returned home covered with glory because he preferred to be honoured in his parents' dignity rather than
21 in his own. I had almost overlooked a point which should under no circumstances have been omitted. In the days of old time, as the Psalmist tells,[2] all Israel heaped offerings at the feet of Bezaleel in the desert for the erection of the Tabernacle of the Covenant.

Afterwards Solomon, to build his temple in Jerusalem, exhausted the whole strength of his people, though he had not merely the riches of Palestine and the tribute of surrounding kingdoms, but in addition the treasures of the Queen of Sheba at his command. But Simplicius built a church alone out of his own slender resources, when he was still a young official under paternal control, and already burdened with the expenses of a family. Neither consideration of his young children nor the steady opposition of his parents could divert him from the fulfilment of his vow; it was his way to do good works, and hold his peace about them. For unless I misread his character, he 22
is one to whom all popularity is abhorrent; he does not court every man's good opinion, only that of the worthiest; it is not his custom to make himself common by undiscriminating familiarity, but rather to enhance his value by according his friendship only after the most careful thought. His is a manly nature which would rather help than please a rival, comparable in this to that of the stern father, who thinks more of his children's real advantage than of their present comfort. He is a man constant in adversity, loyal in danger, unassuming in prosperity; of simple tastes in dress, affable in conversation, never putting himself forward among his friends, but in discussion easily the first. A friendship of which he knows the worth he will pursue with ardour, hold with constancy, and never abandon; on the other hand, a declared hostility he pursues with honourable frankness, not believing in it till the last moment, and laying it down at the earliest. Extremely accessible just because he seeks nothing for

himself, he desired not so much to assume the priest-
23 hood as to prove himself worthy to hold it. But some one will say: 'How did you learn so much about him in so short a time?' My answer is that I made acquaintance with men of Bourges long before I knew their city. I have travelled with some and served with others; many I have met in affairs of business or in debate; many when either they or I were away from our several countries. Moreover, a short cut to knowledge of a man is given by the general opinion about him, since nature does not confine our reputations within such narrow limits as our abodes. If, then, a city is to be judged less by the circumference of its walls than by the merit of its inhabitants, I could not fail to discover, before your town was known to me, not only what manner of men you are, but where you stand in the world as well.

24 The wife of Simplicius belongs to the Palladian family, which alike in the schools and in the Church has occupied the chief seats with the approbation of its own order. To speak of a woman's life demands both delicacy and reticence; I will only say here that this lady has shown herself worthy of the ecclesiastical dignity enjoyed by her two families, both that in which she was born, and that into which she married. She is associated with her husband in the education of their sons on sound and careful principles; so that the father, comparing them with himself, is all the happier for the discovery that he is already being surpassed.

25 You have sworn to abide by my humble advice in this election; the spoken binds no less fast than the written word. I pronounce, then, in the name of the

Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit that Simplicius is the man whom you are to choose as the head of the Church in your city, and as Metropolitan of our province. If you agree with this my new pronouncement, give it the applause which your old promise demands.

X (XI)

To the Lord Bishop Graecus

A. D. 474

I ENVY the fortune of my habitual messenger who 1
has the chance of seeing you so often. Nor do I confine my envy to Amantius;[1] I am jealous of the very letters opened by the hands, and perused by the eyes which I so much revere. Alas! penned as I am within the narrow enclosure of half-burned and ruinous walls, with the terror of war at the gates, I am never allowed to satisfy my longing to greet you again. Would that the state and prospects of Clermont were such as to make our excuses for not meeting less excusable! It is the hardest stroke of all that the 2
very punishment of our old lapses from justice should become our justification. My salutations rendered, I now earnestly beg you to release me from my duty of paying you a visit; I must discharge the debt as well as I can by letter. If peace ever makes the roads secure again, your only fear need be that I shall present myself so often as to become in future a mere nuisance. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

XI (X)

To the Lord Bishop Auspicius

A. D. 473

1 If the state of our country and our times allowed me freedom, I should not keep up my friendships by the poor expedient of correspondence. But since the storms aroused by the shock of kingdoms confound all hopes of fraternal peace and quiet, let us retain in separation that constant exchange of letters so long ago devised for the solace of absent friends, and approved by the example of antiquity. You must forgive one who so reveres you the rarity of his visits; but the unbroken enjoyment of your sainted converse is denied him by the menace of formidable neighbours and by the delicacy of his relations with his own protectors.[1] On these points I need say no more: I have
2 already said too much. This letter introduces to you the bearer Peter, a man of tribunician rank; he personally pressed for the introduction, and will be better able to explain his business orally. I beg that the sight of this page from me may secure him your support, in so far as may be consistent with justice; it is not my custom to urge even my friends' claims unfairly. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

XII

To his friend [Tonantius] Ferreolus

c. A.D. 479

1 If, disregarding our friendship and relations, I had considered only your rank and position, your name

would have taken its proper place at the beginning of this small work, and the dedication would have been yours. My pen should have recounted the curule chairs of your ancestors and the *infulae* of their patrician dignity; it should not have omitted the twice repeated prefecture, or refused to herald with due praise your great Syagrius for three times changing the heralds of his office. It should have proceeded to celebrate your father and your uncles, whom it were impossible, indeed, to pass in silence; and however worn by transcribing 2
the long roll of your ancestral triumphs, it should not have been so spent by the unfolding of your genealogy as to grow too blunt for the record of your own achievements. Why even if the recital of your ancestral glories had dulled it, that of your great personal qualities would lend it a new point. In place of all this, it is determined to pay you here conspicuous homage and, leaving your past career to speak for itself, to consider rather what you are to-day. It has 3
passed over your administration of the Gauls when they were still at their greatest extent. It has been silent on the efficacy of your measures against Attila the enemy on the Rhine and Thorismond the guest of the Rhône, and on your support of Aëtius the Liberator of the Loire. It has not related the dragging of your chariot by cheering provincials, whose fervent applause proclaimed their gratitude for the prudence and the foresight with which you handled the reins of power; since you ruled the Gauls with such wisdom that the exhausted proprietor was relieved from the unbearable yoke of taxes. It passed over the address with which you influenced the savage Gothic king

by a language blending grace with gravity and astuteness, a language unfamiliar in his ears, causing him to withdraw from the gates of Arles by a banquet, where Aëtius could not have succeeded by force of arms.
4 All this it forbore to dwell upon because it was my hope that you might more fitly find a place among the bishops than the senators; I deemed it more appropriate that your name should be found among the perfect of the Lord than among the prefects of Valentinian. Malice need not misconstrue your insertion among the priests; only great ignorance can hold that a man could lose rank thereby. Just as at a public banquet the last guest at the first table takes precedence of the first guest at the second, so in the opinion of all reasonable men the least of the religious is beyond dispute above the holder of the highest office. I ask your prayers on my behalf.

XIII

To his friend Sulpicius

c. A.D. 470

1 YOUR son Himerius the priest,[1] of whom I had hitherto seen little but heard much, his reputation being wide, came to Lyons not long ago from Troyes, and there I had a hurried opportunity of forming an opinion of him. In character he reminds me of the sainted Lupus, the foremost of our Gallic bishops, master of his sacred profession, and author of his rank within
2 it. Just God! how charming is his way of enouncing his views, whether he is urging or debating any given course of action! With what point he speaks when

asked his advice, with what sweetness when he has resort to that of others! He is an enthusiast for letters, above all for sacred literature, in which he ever avoids the froth of verbiage and chooses the substantial marrow. The end of his every action is Christ's service; if he accelerates or delays, it is for that. It is a thing at once wonderful and admirable, that although he is always tranquil he does nothing idle. Fasts are a joy to him, 3 yet he does not abjure the social board; the way of the cross keeps him faithful to the first, love of his kind inclines him sometimes to the last. In either case he uses the utmost moderation; when he dines, he mortifies his appetite; when he fasts, it is without vain-glory. On others he showers favours, but is reluctant to accept theirs; and when his turn to receive an equivalent comes, prefers that the debt should remain unpaid. It is his way to give his inferiors precedence at table, 4 or in council, or when travelling; this makes his superiors in rank delight to follow his example, and place themselves below him when they can. In intercourse with others he shows the utmost tact. The stranger is put at his ease; the feelings of a friend are never hurt. The over-credulous are not placed in false positions, nor are the curious rebuffed. Suspicion he meets without malice; he does not say hard things of knowledge, or treat ignorance with contempt. In the Church he has the simplicity of the dove, in the world the wisdom of the serpent. In his dealings with the good he has a name for prudence, with the bad for caution; but with neither does he resort to guile. Enough: he seemed to 5 me your second self, reproducing in the most charming manner all your moderation, your piety, your

frankness, your modesty, the supreme purity of a sensitive and delicate mind. So that in future you can enjoy your privacy, and retire from the world as much as ever you like, since my brother Himerius with his grandsire's name, his father's looks, and the sage qualities of both will always be at my disposal. Farewell.

XIV

To his friend Philagrius

c. A. D. 470

1 A SHORT while since at a large gathering of the principal persons here, some one mentioned your name. All were unanimous in sounding your praises, though one esteemed you for one quality and a second for another. Then certain individuals took on themselves to claim a more intimate acquaintance, on the ground that they saw you frequently. That made me flare up; I could not for a moment allow it to be said that one distinguished in all kinds of letters is better known by his countrified neighbours than by men of culture
2 living a great distance away. The discussion was carried further; some present argued the point with obstinacy, for it is characteristic of stupid people that they are easily proved wrong, but very hard to silence. I stood my ground, and maintained that it might indeed be trying for such a man's cultured friends to be deprived of his society, but that all the same it was endurable; their brains and their pens gave them access to the remotest province where the need of culture was felt, while the unlettered fellow citizen was always a stranger within the gates. It was matter

of frequent experience, I said, for men of education, separated by wide distances, to conceive for each other an esteem as great as any which can be produced by the most assiduous of personal relations. That being so, they had better leave off exaggerating the effect of unavoidable separations, for they only showed that they thought more of face than character. People may 3
argue, if they like, that matter, not mind, makes the man,[1] but I am at a loss to find anything to wonder at in the human race, viewed corporeally, for its limits are so narrow, however wide its range of action; by the conditions of its birth, it is the most miserable and helpless of all that sees the light. The ox has his hairy coat, the boar his bristles, the bird its feathers; and in addition, these creatures have arms for offence and for defence in their horns and tusks and claws. But man's limbs are such poor things that they seem to have been flung at random into the world, not brought into it by intelligible laws. For other animals broad-bosomed Nature, like a true mother, provides all manner of protection; the human body she just casts forth, to give it thenceforward the stepmother's indifferent usage. To me, who hold that your mind 4
is greater than your body, the contrary supposition is untenable; it would be ridiculous, on that hypothesis, that man should be differentiated by possession of a reasoning mind from beasts unable to distinguish the true from the false. I should like to ask those who so absurdly judge friends by appearances instead of investigation, what remains when they have even in the slightest degree impaired the dignity of the human soul, what after that they find so eminent and admirable

5 in man? Is it height? that is often a quality more appropriate in a beam. Is it strength? that reigns more mightily in the lion's sinewy neck. Grace of feature? the clay of the statue and the wax of the portrait[1] hold its impress better. Is it speed? for that, dogs are more justly famed than we. Vigilance? for that prize the owl competes. Is it strength of voice? the ass's bray is loudest. Industry? therein, on its tiny scale, the ant
6 fears no comparison. Do they allege keenness of sight? how absurd! as if the eagle's vision were not far above that of man. Keenness of hearing? as if the coarse-skinned swine were not his rival. Keenness of scent? as if in that the vulture were not supreme. Discernment of taste? as if there we were not far behind the monkey. I need hardly trouble to speak of touch, our fifth sense; the philosopher shares it with the worm. Why speak of the carnal appetites? the man's lust is
7 satisfied in the same way as that of the brute. And this poor thing is the humanity, paraded and tricked out by fools who give themselves airs and flout me because they know you more or less by sight! But I have always before my eyes a Philagrius other than theirs, a Philagrius who would not be himself if I saw him and he did not speak. The whole argument recalls to me a certain well-known remark, made on a different kind of occasion, it is true, but nevertheless to our point: 'The son of Marcus Cicero was speaking, and Rome did not even know who he was.'[2] For accomplishments of mind bring with them dignity, worth, and the pre-eminence recognized by universal consent, and by their means alone man gradually attains
8 the heights of merit. First you have the animal frame,

which by virtue of its form excels formless matter. Above that comes the body, possessing intelligence. And above the intelligence of beasts rises the mind of man. For as mere flesh is below life, so mere life is below reason, of which the Creator has made our substance alone capable, and not the substance of animals. Yet how variously conditioned is the human mind! There are souls which are rational indeed, but by reason of slowness and dull wits are spurned by others which see further and more clearly. In like manner, there are souls which, having only a natural understanding, accept the superiority of those more enlightened than themselves. When I consider these 9
gradations I always have before my mind's eye the Philagrius whom a similarity of tastes has made, potentially at least, my friend. However popular you may be, with the worthiest among us, no man has a clearer insight into your inner nature than he who strives outwardly to imitate you. And how closely I for my own part try to follow you in your inclinations, the rest of this letter shall reveal. They say you like quiet people; I go 10
further, and like the idle. You shun barbarians because of the bad name they bear; I avoid them even when they bear a good one.[1] You are ardent in study; I do not suffer a natural indolence to hold me back. You act up to your religion; I only seem to do so. You do not covet your neighbour's goods; I hold it sufficient gain not to lose my own. You love the society of the 11
learned; to me the bigger the crowd of the unlettered, the vaster is the solitude. You are said to be of a cheerful countenance; I hold that every tear shed on earth except in prayer is vain. You are reported to

be given to hospitality; my poor table, like the cave of Polyphemus, rejects no possible guest. You are indulgent with your servants; it is no torture to me that mine are not tortured for each trivial fault committed.
12 Is it your view that a man should fast on alternate days? I am with you. That he should dine? I am not ashamed to anticipate you there. If Providence would grant me a sight of you, I should be as delighted as only he can be to whom even your smaller traits are familiar; with your greater qualities I am of course thoroughly acquainted. So that if I ever do manage to see you face to face, I shall hardly know you any better than I do now, though I may gain a new pleasure in existence. Farewell.

XV

To his friend Salonius

c. A.D. 470

1 Every time I go to Vienne, I would give a great deal if you and your brother stayed more frequently in the town, for we three are all united not only by the ties of friendship but by those of a common literary interest.[1] But your brother eludes my reproaches by pretending the visits he has constantly to make to his suburban property, so that he is never present to stand on his own defence; you in your turn find a similar excuse, as one possessed by a newly-acquired posses-
2 sion. Be all this as it may, come this time, and I will let you go on condition that you both promise to come again, either in turn, or [together?] at some later time. You may live in the country and be model cultivators;

but not till you give more labour yet to the Church which you love, will you bring increase to the true land of your souls. Farewell.

XVI

To Abbot Chariobaudus

A. D. 477

In alleviating by a letter of condolence the trouble of 1
an absent friend, O my one patron in Christ, you have acted like your benevolent self. May your thoughts ever turn to me thus; may this interminable chain of anxieties which your exhortations have worn down be finally broken by your prayers. I think your freedmen have concluded the business on 2
which you sent them, and are on their way home; they have done everything with such energy that they never required any assistance. I send you by them a cowl for nightwear, though I admit that the end of winter, with summer in sight, is not quite the right time to send you woollens. When you are exhausted by long fasting, it shall give you proper protection as you pass from your bed to Vigils and back again. Farewell.

XVII

To his brother Volusianus

A. D. 477

You ask me, my lord brother, by the law of friend- 1
ship which none may infringe, to set my long inactive fingers to the old forge. I am to write a sad funeral

dirge for the sainted Abraham,[1] newly departed this life. I shall not fail to obey, moved alike by your authority, and even more by the devotion of the noble Count Victorius, my patron according to the world, my son according to the Church, whom I honour as a client, and love as a father. He gave abundant proof of his ardent solicitude for the servants of Christ, when by the sick priest's couch he humbled his dignity and bent his body low above the dying, his own face sympathetically paling with that already colourless by the approach of death; while his tears betrayed his deep feeling for the
2 friend he was to lose. He has insisted on taking the funeral almost entirely upon himself and defraying all the expenses required for the due obsequies of a priest; to complete the honour due to the memory of the departed, I can only contribute these few words, confining my pen to a plain testimony of a mutual affection.

* 'Abraham, worthy to stand beside the celestial patrons whom I shall not fear to call thy colleagues, since they are gone before on the path which thou shalt follow; a share in the martyr's glory gives a share in the kingdom of heaven. Born by Euphrates, for Christ thou didst endure the prison, chains, and hunger for five long years. From the cruel King of Susa[2] thou didst fly, escaping alone to the distant land of the West. Marvels born of his holiness followed the steps of the confessor; thyself a fugitive, thou didst put to flight the spirits of evil. Wherever thy footsteps passed, the throng of Lemures cried surrender; the exile's voice bade the demons go forth into banishment. All sought

* The verses are translated by Fertig, Part ii, p. 45.

thee, yet didst thou yield to no vain ambition; the honours acceptable in thy sight were those that brought the heaviest burdens. Thou didst shun the tumult of Rome and of Byzantium, and the walls of the city that warlike Titus breached.[1] Not Alexandria held thee, not Antioch; thou spurnedst Byrsa, the famed home of Dido.[2] Thou didst contemn the populous lands of Ravenna by the marshes, and the city named from the woolly swine.[3] But this corner of earth was pleasing to thee, this poor retreat, this hut roofed with reeds. Here didst thou rear a sacred house to God, thou whose own frame was already itself His temple. Here ended thy wanderings, here thy life's course; now thy labours are rewarded by a twofold crown. Now dost thou stand in Paradise amid the thousands of the Saints, with Abraham for thy fellow wanderer. Now art thou entered into thine own land, from which Adam fell; now lies thy way clear to the sources of thy native stream.'[4]

With these lines I have paid, as you desired, the last 3
observance due to him who is now laid to rest. But if it is the duty of those who yet live, of brothers, friends and comrades, to obey the commands of brotherly affection, I shall make you a request in my turn: I would beg you to use the principles with which you are so eminently endowed for the consolation of the dead man's followers, confirm by the discipline of Lerins or of Grigny[5] the shaken rule of a brotherhood now cast adrift without a leader. If you find any insubordinate, see to it in person that they are punished; if any obedient, give them praise from your own lips. The holy Auxanius is presumed to be their head; but he, as

you well know, is too infirm of body and of too diffident a character, and more fitted to obey than to command. He himself insists that you should be called in, that in succeeding to the headship of the house, he may have the support of your overheadship; for if any of the younger monks should treat him with disrespect, as one lacking alike in courage and experience, thanks to you, a joint rule would not be slighted with impunity. I say no more. If you would have my wishes in a few words, they are these; I desire brother Auxanius to be abbot over the rest, and you yourself to be above the abbot. Farewell.

XVIII

To his friend Constantius

c. A.D. 479

1 'With you my work began, with you it shall end.'[1] I send the volume for which you asked, but the choice of letters has been rather hurried. I could only find comparatively few; I had not preserved any number, never having contemplated their appearance in this form. Few and trivial as they are, I was soon done with them; though when I had once started, I found the love of scribbling by no means dead within me, and that I was keen to balance any deficiency in their number by an addition to their length.

2 At the same time, I thought that if it was to attract so fine a critic, the book would be handier and need less apology if you had a smaller weight of parchment to deal with, since in parts there was a certain

lightness of style and subject which might give you cause of offence. I therefore submit to your judgement these manifold emotions of my heart, well aware that a book as surely reflects a man's mind as a mirror his face. A few of the letters preach, a number congratulate; some offer advice, others consolation; not a few are humorous.

If here and there you find that I show unexpected 3
heat, I would have you know that while Christ is my defender I will never suffer my judgement to be enslaved; I know as well as any one that with regard to this side of my character there are two opinions: the timid call me rash, the resolute a lover of freedom; I myself strongly feel that the man who has to hide his real opinions cuts a very abject 4
figure. To return to my original subject. If you ever allow yourself a rest from your unending studies in religious literature, these trivialities should afford you innocent distraction. There is here no interminable theme to weary you; each subject ends with its containing letter; you can see where you are at a glance, and have done before the inclination to read has died within you. Farewell.

BOOK VIII

I

To his friend Petronius

c. A. D. 480

1 A MAN who makes it a principle, whenever he can, to encourage his friends along the path of glory deserves the gratitude of all good men everywhere: the practice is your honourable distinction; be true to it always. To no other cause can I ascribe this new request that I should turn out my cases at Clermont in the search for further letters. I should have thought the examples already published would have satisfied you; but I must needs obey, though I shall merely append a few at the end to supplement the original series, and crown the completed
2 volume, as it were, by a marginal addition. I shall now have fresh reason to be on my guard against malignant critics, for adding in this way to a book which has already seen the light. How, indeed, could I hope to escape the edged tongues of the spiteful-born, when even a Demosthenes and a Cicero for all their masterly periods and their perfected eloquence were not permitted to go free? The first found his detractor in Demades, the second in Antonius, carpers both, whose malice was as clear as their diction was obscure, and who have come down to posterity simply through
3 their hate of excellence. But since the command has gone forth, I set my sail to the old winds; I have navigated oceans, and shall I not cross this quiet

water? I have always been convinced that a man should give of his best in anything he writes, and then tranquilly face all criticism. There is no middle course; one must either care no jot for what the malignant say, or else hold one's peace altogether. Farewell.

II

To his friend Johannes

A. D. 478

I SHOULD hold myself guilty of something like a 1
crime against polite learning, most accomplished of friends, were I for a moment to defer congratulation on your own success in deferring the decease of Literature. One might almost speak of her as dead and buried; it is your glory to have revived, supported and championed her, and in this tempest of war which has wrecked the Roman power, you are the sole master in Gaul who has brought the Latin tongue safely into port. Our contemporaries and our successors should all with 2
one accord and fervent gratitude dedicate statues or portraits to you, as to a new Demosthenes or Tully; by your example they were formed and educated, and they shall preserve in the very midst of an invincible but alien race this evidence of their ancient birthright. Since old grades of rank are now abolished which once distinguished the high from the low, in future culture must afford the sole criterion of nobility. None is more deeply indebted to your learning than I; for like all authors professed, who write for posterity, I shall owe to your school and your teaching the certainty of an understanding audience. Farewell.

III

To his friend Leo

A. D. 478

1 I SEND you, at your request, the *Life of Apollonius the Pythagorean*,[1] not in the transcription by Nicomachus the Elder, from Philostratus, but in that from Nicomachus himself by Tascius Victorianus.[2] I was so eager to fulfil your wish, that the result is a makeshift of a copy, obscure and over-hurried, and rough as any version could be.[3] Yet the work took me longer than I expected, and for this you must not blame me, for all the time I was a captive within the walls of Livia,[4] release from which I owe, next to Christ, to you. My mind was sick with care and really unable to fulfil my task even in the most desultory manner; all kinds of hindrances prevented me—various obligations by day, my utter misery
2 at night. When the evening hour brought me at last to my quarters, ready to drop with fatigue, my heavy eyelids knew small repose; there were two old Gothic women established quite close to the window of my chamber, who at once began their chatter—quarrelsome, drunken, and disgusting creatures, whose like will not easily be seen again. As soon as my restoration to my own home gave me a little leisure, I dispatched the book with all its faults upon it, uncorrected, ill-digested, as you might say, an immature wine; in doing so, I thought more of your anxiety to have it, than of
3 my own responsibilities. Now that your wish is gratified, forsake awhile Apollo's bays and the fount of Hippocrene; forget the measures of which you alone

are absolute master, and which, in those who have only your learning without your eloquence, seem not so much to rise from a well-spring as to drip painfully from fevered brows. Stay the renowned stream of an eloquence peculiar to your race and line, which, flowing from your ancestor the great Fronto through successive generations, has now passed in due course into your breast. Lay aside awhile the universally applauded speeches composed for the royal lips, those famed deliverances with which the glorious monarch from his exalted place strikes terror into the hearts of tribes beyond the seas, or binds a treaty on the necks of barbarians trembling by the Waal,[1] or throughout his newly extended realm curbs force itself by law as once he curbed his foes by force. Shake off the burden of 4
your endless cares and steal a little leisure from the affairs and agitations of the court. Not till you surrender yourself wholly to this book, and in imagination voyage with our Tyaneus to Caucasus and Ind, among the Gymnosophists of Ethiopia and the Brahmins of Hindostan, not till then shall you know the story you desired in its right hour and as it should be known. Read, then, the life of a man who, but for 5
his paganism, in many points resembled you, as one who did not pursue riches, but was pursued by the rich; who loved knowledge and did not covet money; who was abstemious among the feasters and went in coarse linen among princes robed in purple; who was grave amid luxurious follies; whose hair was matted, whose face was rough and hirsute among smooth, anointed peoples; who was conspicuous in the dignity of his squalor among satraps of crowned monarchs exquisite in person

and drenched with nard and myrrh; who abstained from animal flesh and would not clothe himself in wool,—for such abstinence, indeed, held more in honour than contempt in the Eastern kingdoms which he traversed. When royal treasures were placed at his disposal, he asked only the gifts he liked to offer others and would
6 not keep himself. Why pursue the subject further? Unless I am much at fault, it may be doubted whether our ancestors' days produced a biographer fit to write so great a life; but of this there is no doubt at all, that in your person our own times have produced a student worthy to peruse it. Farewell.

IV

To his friend Consentius

c. A.D. 478

1 Will Providence ever allow us to meet once more, honoured lord, on your estate of Octaviana—I call it yours, but it seems really to belong to your friends just as much as to you. Situated as it is near town and sea and river, it offers continual hospitality to all comers, and to yourself a regular succession of guests. How charming, too, is its first aspect, with its walls so cleverly designed in perfect architectural symmetry! how brilliant is the gleam of chapel colonnade and baths conspicuous near and far! Then there is the amenity of its fields and waters, its vines and olives, its approach, its beauty of hill and plain. Well stocked and furnished with abundance, it has also a large and copious library;

when the master is there, dividing his interests between pen and plough, one might be in doubt whether his mind or his estate enjoys the finer culture. No 2
wonder this was the chosen place (unless my memory deceives me) where you have produced the swift iambics, the pointed elegiacs, the rounded hendecasyllables, and all the other verses fragrant with thyme and flowers of poesy to be sung by every one at Béziers and Narbonne! These poems, no less remarkable for speed of composition than for charm of style, make you beloved of your contemporaries and must increase your fame among those who shall come after us. I have always been convinced of it myself every time a new poem of yours has been brought me, as it were hot from the composer's anvil, and though I may be an indifferent writer, I am no such despicable critic. My earlier 3
life might not improperly find time for such pursuits, and in fact it did so. But now I only read and write of serious things, for now it is high time to think rather of eternal life than of posthumous renown, and to remember that after death our good works, and not our literary work, will be weighed in the balance. I am far from implying by this 4
that you do not excel in both, or that the lively style which you still affect is inconsistent with gravity of judgement; but since by Christ's grace you are already a saint in secret, I would have you openly submit to His salutary yoke a head and heart alike devoted to His service, your tongue unwearying in prayer and praise, your mind filled with pious thoughts, your hand ever open in benefaction. Especially would I insist upon the open hand, for all that you cast abroad

among the churches is really gathered in for yourself. Let this reflection above all incite you to the exercise of generosity, that whatever be our opportunities in respect of the things which the foolish call this world's goods, all that we give in charity remains our own, all that we keep is really lost to us. Farewell.

V

To his friend Fortunalis

c. A. D. 480

1 You too shall figure in my pages, dear Fortunalis, column of friendship, bright ornament of your Spanish country. Your own acquaintance with letters is not, after all, so slight as to deprive you of any immortality which they can confer. The glory of your name shall
2 live; yes, it shall survive into after ages. If my writings win any favour or respect, if they command any confidence among men, I will have posterity know that none were more stout of heart than you; that none were goodlier to see or more equitable in judgement, none more patient, none weightier in council, gayer in company, or more charming in conversation. Last, and not least, it shall learn that these praises have been enhanced by your misfortunes. For it is more likely to hold you great, as one proved in the hard day of adversity, than as one who lay hidden in the bosom of kind fortune. Farewell.

VI

*To his friend Namatius**

c. A.D. 480

Caius Julius Caesar, reputed the greatest master 1
of strategy who ever lived, was a great reader and a great writer also. Though he was the first man of his age, and the arts of war and rhetoric disputed his genius with equally glorious results, yet he never considered himself to have attained the summit in either branch of knowledge until your orator of Arpinum proclaimed him without a rival among men. To com- 2
pare small things with great [1], it has been the same in my own case, however vast my inferiority. No one should know this better than yourself, concerned as you have always been for my success and for my modesty in bearing it. I learn that Flavius Nicetius, distinguished above all his countrymen by his birth, his rank, his merit, his prudence, his wise knowledge of the world, has accorded my small work unlimited praise. He has gone further and declared that while yet in the prime of life I have surpassed in the two fields of literature and war the great number of our young men and not a few of the older among us. If I may say it without 3
vanity, I derive real satisfaction from the approval of so eminent a judge. If he is right, his weight counts for much; if partial, I have a fresh proof of his friendship; though nowadays every man of us is but a sluggard in deed, and in word an infant in comparison with his

* The latter part translated by Hodgkin (ii. 366–8), who also refers to the episode of Nicetius' oration (ibid. 306–7).

forefathers. To the men of earlier ages the ruler of all ages granted supreme excellence in these arts ; but now the world waxes old, the quickening seed is exhausted, the marrow lost ; and if in our time aught of admirable or memorable appears, it is manifest in exceeding few.

4 Nicetius may lead all learning and all letters, but I fear that our intimacy may have led him to exaggerate my merit through the bias natural to friendship. And were it so, I will not deny that in the past I used often to attend the delivery of his luminous speeches, and however fleeting or imperfect my memories, I may properly recall some of them in the present place, even at the risk of being thought to join a game of mutual admiration.

5 I heard him speak when I was growing to manhood and had just left boyhood behind me ; at that time my father was praetorian prefect presiding over the tribunals of Gaul, and in his term of office Astyrius assumed the trabea and in a propitious hour inaugurated his consulship.[1] On that day I hardly stirred from the curule chair ; my age gave me no right to a seat, but my rank allowed me to keep in the foreground ; so I stood next to the censor's men who in their official mantles stood nearest to the consul. As soon as the largess had been distributed (and that took little time though it was no little one), as soon as the diptychs had been bestowed, the representative advocates of the province who had come in from every district asked with one consent that the assumption of the consul's office might be celebrated in a panegyric. The ceremonies had anticipated the day, and there was yet some time before the late dawn, which otherwise would have been passed in

silence. All eyes turned at once towards Nicetius, the 6
first men present were the first to look his way; the
assembly called upon him not by a voice here or there,
but by general acclamation; he reddened, and cast down
his eyes, giving us such an earnest of his modest nature
as gained him hardly fewer bravos than the eloquence
he subsequently displayed. He spoke with method,
with gravity, with fire; if his ardour was great, his
fluency was yet greater, and his science greatest of all;
his coloured and golden language seemed to enhance
the splendour of the consul's palm-embroidered robe,
steeped though it was in Sarranian dyes and rich with
applied strips that rustled at every movement of the
wearer. About that time (to speak like a decemvir) 7
was promulgated the statute of limitations[1] which
decreed in summary terms that all cases protracted to
thirty years should automatically lapse. It was our
orator who first introduced this law, as yet unknown in
Gaul; he advocated it at the tribunal; he expounded
it to the various parties; and he finally saw it added to
the statute-book, before a great audience whose members
mostly kept their feet in their excitement and only inter-
rupted by applause. I had many other occasions of 8
observing his intellectual capacity, myself unobserved,
and therefore in the best of all positions to see the real
man; for though my father governed the province,
it was to Nicetius that he went for advice. It must
suffice to say that I never heard of a single action of which
I did not like to hear, and which I did not admire.

The union in his person of all these fine qualities 9
naturally makes me proud to receive the suffrage of
a critic so high in the public esteem. Whatever his

opinion, it must have great influence; if rumour is true, he is on my side, and I shall have just as good reason to be reassured as I should have had to feel uneasy had his vote gone the other way. In any case, I am determined, as soon as I know for certain what he thinks, either to give silence a loose rein, or curb my facility according to the verdict. For if he supports me I shall be inclined to go on talking like an Athenian; if he condemns, no citizen of Amyclae shall hold his tongue like me.[1]

10 But no more of myself or of my friend: how does the world go with you? I am every whit as eager to hear your news as to give you mine. Are you hunting, or building, or playing the country gentleman? Are you indulging one only of these pursuits or each in turn, or all together? As for Vitruvius and Columella,[2] you do well to study either one or both, for you are competent to deal with either admirably, as one who is equally at home in
11 agriculture and in building. With sport the case is different, and I beg you not to plume yourself upon your prowess. It is useless to invite the boar to meet your spears, so long as you take the field alone with those exceedingly merciful hounds of yours; you just rouse the quarry, but not enough to make him run. It is excusable enough that your dogs should dread close quarters with such formidable beasts as boars; but what apology can you make when they hunt poor helpless kids and timid does, head high and spirits prone, stinting the
12 pace but prodigal of music? You will find it more profitable to net in the rough rocks and likely coverts, and cry the dogs on from a chosen post; if you have any self-respect left, you will give up galloping over the open country and lying in wait for the leverets of Oléron.

Indeed it is hardly worth while to worry them on rare occasions by unleashing the hounds in the open, unless our good Apollinaris comes to help you and your father, and gives you a better run.

But, joking apart, do let me know how things go with 13
you and your household. Just as I was on the point of ending a letter which had rambled on long enough, lo and behold! a courier from Saintonges. I whiled away some time talking with him about you; and he was very positive that you had weighed anchor, and in fulfilment of those half military, half naval duties of yours were coasting the western shores on the look-out for curved ships; the ships of the Saxons,[1] in whose every oarsman you think to detect an arch-pirate. Captains and crews alike, to a man they teach or learn the art of brigandage; therefore let me urgently caution you to be ever on the alert. For the Saxon is the most ferocious of all 14
foes. He comes on you without warning; when you expect his attack he makes away. Resistance only moves him to contempt; a rash opponent is soon down. If he pursues he overtakes; if he flies himself, he is never caught. Shipwrecks to him are no terror, but only so much training. His is no mere acquaintance with the perils of the sea; he knows them as he knows himself. A storm puts his enemies off their guard, preventing his preparations from being seen; the chance of taking the foe by surprise makes him gladly face every hazard of rough waters and broken rocks.

Moreover, when the Saxons are setting sail from 15
the continent, and are about to drag their firm-holding anchors from an enemy's shore, it is their usage,

thus homeward bound, to abandon every tenth captive to the slow agony of a watery end, casting lots with perfect equity among the doomed crowd in execution of this iniquitous sentence of death. This custom is all the more deplorable in that it is prompted by honest superstition. These men are bound by vows which have to be paid in victims, they conceive it a religious act to perpetrate this horrible slaughter, and to take anguish from the prisoner in place of ransom; this polluting sacrilege is in their
16 eyes an absolving sacrifice. I am full of anxiety and apprehension about these dangers, though on the other hand there are factors which encourage me mightily. Firstly, the standards under which you sail are those of an ever-victorious nation. Secondly, men of prudence, among whose number you may fairly be included, are not in the habit of leaving anything to chance. Thirdly, very intimate friends who live far from each other are apt to feel alarm without due cause, because it is natural to be apprehensive of events at once incalcu-
17 lable and occurring very far away. You will perhaps argue that the cause of my uneasiness need not be taken so seriously. That may be true; but it is also true that we are most timid in regard to those whom we love best. So take the first opportunity of relieving the fears which your situation has aroused by a good account of your fortunes. I am incorrigible on this head, and shall always fear the worst for friends abroad until they contradict it themselves, especially those harassed by the watchword or the signal for attack.
18 In accordance with your request, I send you the *Libri Logistorici* of Varro and the Chronology of Eusebius.[1] If these models reach you safely, and you find a little

leisure from the watches and the duties of the camp, you will be able, your arms once furbished, to apply another kind of polish to an eloquence which must be getting rusty. Farewell.

VII

To his friend Audax

A. D. 474

I WISH you would tell me into what corner of the 1
world the folk are crept who used to be so proud of wealth amassed, and heaps of tarnished family plate.[1] Where, too, are the men who on mere grounds of seniority thought to overbear those whose one sin it was to be younger? Where are the people gone whose real affinities come out in nothing so clearly as in their capacity for hatred? As soon as ever merit found 2
recognition, as soon as ever weight of character, and not weight of coin, began to tell in the scales of imperial opinion, these worthies were left in the cold with their insolent claim to precedence by simple right of property. Brooding over their money-bags, and, I may add, their vices, they want to brand those who rise in the world as vain upstarts, while they would be shocked at the suggestion that they owe their own riches to greed. Athletes in this arena of defamation, they rub in the poisonous juice of spite in place of oil, and so reduce their weight. But all hail to you, whose way is the 3
opposite of theirs. You have now the honour of prefectorian rank, and though the prestige of high descent was always yours, you have if anything laboured rather the more on that account to shed a new

lustre upon your posterity. To an enlightened mind, none seems nobler than he who steadily devotes all his power, his intellect, and his resources to the
4 single end of excelling his forefathers. Well, it shall be my prayer that your sons may equal you, or even (a better prayer still) leave you behind; and that if there is any envious soul who cannot bear to see you advanced above him, he may just endure the seething torment of his own spite, and never having had the chance of patronizing you, have now the fullest reason for his jealousy. It is only justice that under a just prince he should come at the bottom who is personally nothing and only important in personalty; a starveling spirit, and counting only for his money. Farewell.

VIII

To his friend Syagrius

A. D. 474 (?)

1 TELL me, fine flower of our Gallic youth, how much longer your ardour for country labours will bid you scorn the town? How long shall rustic implements unrightfully usurp the hands only worn before by throwing dice? How much longer is your estate of Taionnacus to weary your patrician limbs with a peasant's toil? How much longer, O cavalier turned ploughman, will you go on burying in the winter fallows the spoil of the waving meadows? how much longer ply your blunt and heavy hoe along the interminable vine-rows?
2 Why, professed rival of Serranus and Camillus,[1] do you guide the plough, yet renounce the embroidered toga?

Give up this rustic folly; cease to disgrace your birth. Who cultivates in moderation is lord of his land, who does too much is slave of it. Return to your father-land, return to your father, return to all the loyal friends who can justly claim a place in your affections. Or, if the life of Cincinnatus the Dictator attracts you so, first wed a Racilia [1] to yoke your oxen for you. I don't 3
suggest that a man of sense should neglect his domestic affairs; but he should use moderation and think not merely of what he ought to have but what he ought to be. If you renounce all higher interests, if your one motive in life is the increase of your property, then, what can it avail you to descend from a line of consuls and see every day their ivory curule chairs with applied ornament of gold and their calendars enriched with purple? Your plodding and obscure career will bring you rather burdens from the revenue officials than honour from the censor. Farewell.

IX

*To his friend Lampridius**

A. D. 478

On my arrival at Bordeaux, your messenger brought 1
me a letter from you full of nectar, rich with blooms and pearls. You arraign my silence, and ask me for some of my poems, in a few of those verses of yours which your cadenced voice so often sends echoing from your melodious palate, like music poured from

* The poem partly translated by A. Thierry, *Lettres sur l'histoire de France*, p. 103.

a flute of many stops. In this you take mean advantage of your royal munificence; you have sent your gift; you feel impregnable. Perhaps you have forgotten one satirist's remark about another:

'When Horace says "Evohe", he has plenteously dined.'[1]

2 Enough! You are right to send a command from your place of ease, bidding me sing because you are in the mood to dance. In any case I must obey; and far from acknowledging compulsion, I yield of my own free will; but spare me, if you can, the criticism of your proud Catonian brow. You know well enough what manner of thing a poet's gladness is; his spirit is entangled in grief as the fish in nets; if sorrow or affliction comes, his sensitive soul does not so lightly work free from the bonds of anguish: I am still unsuccessful in obtaining a decision about my mother-in-law's estate, even provisionally, though I have offered a third part of
3 it as ransom.[2] You must see whether the theme of my verses is such as to please you; but my cares forbid me to live in one mood and write in another. It would be unfair to me were you to institute a comparison between our two poems. I am harassed; you are happy. I am in exile;[3] you enjoy your rights of citizenship. I cannot attain your level; I want of you verse like my own, but receive something in-
4 finitely better. But if by any chance these trifles composed in the midst of much mental tribulation obtain indulgence at your hands, I will let you persuade me that they are like the swan's notes, whose song is more harmonious just before his death; or that they are like lyre-strings tensely drawn, which make the

sweeter music the tighter they are strained. But if verses without suggestion of gaiety or ease can never really please, you will find nothing satisfactory in the enclosed. Do not forget, moreover, a second point which tells against me, namely that a piece which you only read and cannot hear recited is robbed of all the advantage which delivery by the author lends it. His manuscript once dispatched, the most musical of poets has no further resource; distance does not allow him to do for himself what mimics do by their accompaniment—make bad verse acceptable by dint of fine delivery.

* 'Lampridius, glory of our Thalia, why urge me now to sing of Cirrha,[1] or the Boeotian Muses, or Helicon's poetic stream called by neighing Pegasus to life at a stroke of his hoof? Why would you make me write as if I had received the Delphic insignia from your Delian god, and, myself a new Apollo, possessed the hangings, and the tripods, the lyre, the quivers, the bows, and gryphons, or tossed from my brow the laurel and the ivy? You, O happy Tityrus, have won your lands again; you may wander through the groves of plane and myrtle, and strike a lyre with which your voice makes perfect harmony. Wondrous is the music of string and tone and measure.

Twice has the moon risen upon me prisoned here;[2] and but once have I been received into the presence. For scant leisure has the King even for himself, since all the subjugated earth awaits his nod. We see in his courts the blue-eyed Saxon, lord of the seas, but

* Translated into verse by Fertig, Part ii, p. 23; and into prose by Chaix, ii. 229.

a timid landsman here. The razor's keen blade, content no more to hold its usual course round the head's extremity, with clean strokes shearing to the skin, drives the margin of the hair back from his brow, till the head looks smaller and the visage longer. We see thee, aged Sygambrian warrior, the back of thy head shaven in sign of thy defeat; but now thou guidest the new-grown locks to the old neck again. Here strolls the Herulian with his glaucous cheeks, inhabitant of Ocean's furthest shore, and of one complexion with its weedy deeps. Here the Burgundian bends his seven feet of stature on suppliant knee, imploring peace. Here the Ostrogoth finds a powerful patron, and crushing the Hun beyond his border, triumphs at home only through his homage to this mighty patron. And here, O Roman, thou also seekest thy protection; if the Great Bear menaces commotion, and the Scythian hordes advance, the strong arm of Euric is invoked, that Garonne, drawing power from the Mars who loves his banks, may bring defence to the dwindled stream of Tiber. Here the Parthian Arsacid[1] himself asks grace to hold, a tributary, his high hall of Susa. He perceives in the regions of the Bosphorus dread war arise with all its enginery, nor hopes that Persia, dismayed at the mere sound of conflict, shall avail to guard alone Euphrates' bank. He who boasts himself kin with stars and near allied to Phoebus, even he becomes a simple mortal, and descends to lowly supplication.

At such a court my days go by in vain. But do you, O Tityrus, refrain, nor invite me more to song. I envy thee no longer; I can but marvel at thy fortune.

For myself, I effect nothing; I utter fruitless prayers, and so become another Meliboeus.'[1]

There is the poem. Read it at your leisure, and 6
like a charioteer already crowned, look down from the balcony to the arena where I struggle still in the sweat and dust of contest. Do not expect me to do the like again, whatever pleasure you derive from this present effort, until the happy day arrives when I can turn my mind once more from dark vaticinations to the service of the Muse. Farewell.

X

To his friend Ruricius

A. D. 479

I AM indeed delighted that you derive from letters 1
at once a benefit and a pleasure. But I should be freer to extol the fire and fluency of your style, were it not that while assiduously praising me yourself you forbid me to return the compliment with interest. Your letter had all the sweetness of affection, all the grace of natural eloquence, all the mastery of style; it failed only in one respect—the choice of subject, and even there you have the credit of good intention, an error of judgement forms its only fault. You cover me with immense laudation. But you should have spared my blushes, and recalled betimes the saying of Symmachus: 'True praise adorns, false praise lashes.'[2] But unless I misjudge your genius 2
you have not only shown sincere affection, but also remarkable dexterity. The really eloquent love to

show the stuff they are made of by choosing a subject full of difficulty; they drive the accomplished pen as if it were the plough of fertile speech through matter sterile as dry and barren soil. Life abounds with examples of skill similarly applied. The hopeless case proves the great doctor, the tempest proves the steersman; for both, the perils traversed enhance reputation; their
3 talent wastes unseen until it finds a proper scope. In the same manner the great orator proves his ample genius most effectively in strait places. Thus Marcus Tullius, who always surpassed his rivals, in his speech for Aulus Cluentius surpassed even himself. Marcus Fronto stood head and shoulders above others in all his pleadings, but in that against Pelops he rose above his own high level. Gaius Plinius won greater fame for his defence of Attia Viriola from the centumvirs' tribune than for the panegyric which almost matched the matchless Trajan.[1]
4 You have followed these great examples; confident in your powers, you have not feared to take so miserable a subject as myself. But let me rather have the succour of your prayers in my depression; do not lure me with a cozening eloquence, or crush my frail and ailing soul by the weight of an illusory renown. Your diction indeed is fine, but your life finer; and I think you will serve me better by your orisons than by your perorations. Farewell.

XI

*To his friend Lupus**

c. A.D. 480

TELL me about your folk of Périgueux and Agen,[1] 1
whose competing claims upon you are ever a source of pious emulation? You are bound to the people of the one place by your own property, to those of the other by your wife's family connexions; your birth tells in favour of the first, your marriage speaks for the second; and the best of it is that each place has good ground for its contention. God has verily marked you for happiness, when the privilege of securing you and keeping you longest becomes an object of ambition to two rival communities. You grant the favour of your 2
presence to each in regular alternation, restoring to one its Drepanius, to the other its Anthedius; if rhetoric be the object of their desire, neither need regret a Paulinus and an Alcimus as long as you are with them.[2] All this makes me marvel more that you should care to ask for any old poems of mine when any day you like you have the rummaging of so representative a library as your own. I cannot refuse you, though this is a time of mourning, and the revival of the old jests is somewhat out of place.

It is but recently that the news reached me of 3
Lampridius the rhetor's murder. He was my very dear friend; and even if no violent death had snatched him from our midst, his end would have smitten me with profound affliction. In the days that are gone,

* An abridged translation is given by Hodgkin, ii. 331 ff.

we had our jokes together, as intimates will; I was Phoebus, he the Odrysian bard.[1] So much it was necessary to premise, or the use of these fanciful epithets would have obscured the sense of the following poem. You must know that once upon a time, when about to visit Bordeaux, I wrote him a letter of inquiry as to quarters, sent with the Muse in advance. Sad though the present occasion is, I feel less constraint in sending these verses, than if I had forwarded some mournful composition on our loss; anything of that sort I should have written ill, while the subject would have been no less painful to yourself.

'Orders of Phoebus to his own beloved Thalia. Dear pupil, lay aside the lyre awhile; bind up your flowing hair with a verdant wreath, and let a zone of ivy gird the up-bound folds of your full-bosomed robe. See you put no soccus on, plunge not the foot deep, as your custom is, in the loose cothurnus; but bind on such sandals as did Harpalyce,[2] or she who felled her wooers with victorious sword. You shall go the swifter, you shall leap and fly along, if your toes are left uncovered to guide your sandalled feet with quick firm steps, and if the chain of laces, with their converging loops, is brought up through a great loop to the leg.[3] So equipped for speed, see that you find my Orpheus, who daily by his sweet and tuneful art softens rocks and trees, aye, and the hardest hearts; my Orpheus, whose style the sonorous tongue of the Arpinate enriches, and the pen of Maro, or thine, Horace, which gladdens the heart of Latium. As lyric bard he excels the great Alcaeus; he is skilled to indite the high strain of tragedy, or the humours of the comic

Muse; he can flame out in satire, and arraign the raging tyrant with resounding voice. To this Orpheus say: "Phoebus comes; he has left the road, his oars now smite the bosom of Garonne, white with sails. He bids you meet him, but first be swift to prepare him hospitable welcome." And to Leontius whom Livia bare, she of the old Senatorial line, say this: "He is almost here." Then go to Rusticus, whose wit belies his name. But if they say they have no room, and that their houses are full, go next to the bishop's gate; kiss the holy Gallicinus' hand, and ask the freedom of his lowly dwelling lest, rejected on all sides, I am driven to turn sadly to some sodden tavern, where I should soon need to hold my nose and inveigh against the reeking kitchen with its ruddy sausages which hang in two rows, exhaling odours from thymy pots, while jars and hissing plates send up clouds of steam together. Even there, when the feast-day rouses the hoarse song, and the parasite in the ecstasy of his grumbling makes the air resound, yes, even there and even then, my voice incited by the muse of a thirsty host, I, worse barbarian than all, shall whisper verses more worthy of your praise.'

Alas for the abject necessity of being born, alas for 4
the miserable necessity of living, alas for the hard compulsion of death! to these things we are borne round on the voluble wheel of human life. I liked the dead man well; he had his failings, which were venial enough, blending with his virtues qualities of less worth. The slightest cause would excite him, but his wrath was also slight; I always tried to persuade his other friends that these were defects of temperament,

and nowise due to malice; I suggested other points in his favour, as that his passion was a physical tyranny, dominating his nature; I tried to clear him of the blot of cruelty by lending it the colour of mere severity. Though before his mind was made up he was weak, he was most resolute when once convinced. Like all credulous men, he was reckless; like all those who mean no harm, he suspected none in others. He hated no one enough to abuse him, and liked no one enough to resist the pleasure of sometimes breaking out against him. Though a very conspicuous figure, he was not ready of access; he had to be borne with, but he was bearable.

5 If one were to attempt an estimate of him as orator, one would say that he was at once terse and copious, concise and ample; if as poet, that he had feeling, that he was a master of measure, and a consummate literary craftsman. He had the gift of writing verse of extreme finish, and wonderfully varied alike in metre and in metaphor. His hendecasyllables were easy and fluent, his hexameters stately and sonorous; in elegiacs he could handle the 'echoing' or the 'recurrent' line, and could link end with beginning by ingenious repetitions.[1]

6 He could adapt his style to person, place or occasion as the subject required, and that too, not with commonplaces, but by chosen terms replete with dignity and beauty. In controversy he was a power, and wielded a strong arm; in satire alert and mordant. If his subject was tragic, he could command terror and pathos; if comic, he was polished and infinite in resource. In Fescennines his diction was of a vernal freshness and ardent in vows; his bucolics were terse, alert, and

musical. In georgics he could strike the perfect rustic note, though he had no touch of rusticity about him. In epigram he shunned diffuseness and aimed at point; 7
he would always write at least two lines, but never exceeded four; there was often a sting in the words, more often still some graceful turn, and, without exception, wit. Horace was his model in lyrics; his iambics went with a swing, his choriambics with a fine gravity; his Alcaics had a supple grace, and his Sapphics were inspired. In short, his work was so fine, so accomplished, so happy in expression, that one might fairly think of him as a bird of glorious wing, following next after the Horatian and Pindaric swans.

His interest in different amusements was very un- 8
equal. Hazard was a weariness, the ball game a delight. He liked to chaff his friends; and it was a nice feature in him that he liked being chaffed himself still better. He wrote a great deal, but was always longing to write more. He read the ancients with perseverance and reverent admiration, the moderns without jealousy; he would give ungrudging praise to talent, perhaps the most difficult form of generosity on earth. Unfortunately he had the indefensible, I might 9
say the fatal, fault of superstition. He was curious as to the manner of his death, and consulted those African astrologers whose nature is as fiery as their native clime. They considered the position of the stars when he was born, and told him his climacteric year, month, and day—I use the astrological terms—as men to whom the scheme of his nativity was revealed in all its sinister conditions. It seemed that in the year of his birth, all the planets which rose favourably in the zodiac sank

with blood-red fires; whether it was that Mercury made them baleful, asyndetic upon the diameter, or Saturn retrograde upon the tetragon, or Mars returning
10 to his old position upon the centre.[1] Beliefs like these, whatever their precise form, are false, and cannot but delude; if we are to discuss them openly, and at length, we must wait until we meet, for you too are deep in the science of numbers, and with your wonted diligence study Vertacus, Thrasybulus, and Saturninus from end to end: yours is a mind always intent on things lofty and arcane. It must be admitted that in the present case there was neither appearance of mere conjecture nor deliberate ambiguity: death enmeshed our reckless inquirer into the future exactly when and how it had been foretold; all his shifts to
11 evade it were in vain. He was strangled by his own slaves in his own house; choked and throttled he died the death of Scipio of Numantia, if not quite that of Lentulus, Jugurtha, and Sejanus. The one relieving feature in the cruel business was the discovery of crime and criminal as soon as the day broke. The first sight of the body was enough to show a fool or a blind man
12 that death had come by violence. The livid hue, the protruding eyes, the distorted features with their look of mingled fury and anguish, all were so many proofs of what had happened. The floor was wet about his lips, because the scoundrels had turned him with his face to the ground when the deed was done, as if to suggest that life had left him with a sudden haemorrhage. The source, inciter, and ringleader of the conspiracy was first captured; next his accomplices were seized and separately confined till the terror of torture drew the

truth from their unwilling breasts. Would we could 13
say that our friend had not deserved his end by his rash and ill-advised resort to vain advisers. But I fear that he who presumes to probe forbidden secrets sets himself beyond the pale of the Catholic faith; he deserves the lot of all who put unlawful questions and receive replies that point to doom. His death was avenged, it is true, but only the survivors gain by that, for the execution of a murderer cannot mend the mischief; it only affords a certain satisfaction of revenge.

My attachment to the dead man has led me to write 14
at too great length; such a grief I could not vent in silence. I will end by begging you to give me any news you can, if only a line or two, to relieve the burden of my melancholy. For the relation of this sad story with all its horror has naturally troubled me, and filled my mind with mournful thoughts; indeed, for the time being I can neither think, speak, nor write on any other subject. Farewell.

XII

To his friend Trygetius

A. D. 461–7

Has Bazas, built on dust in place of good green 1
earth, such charms, have lands sandy as Syrtes, and moving soil and dunes bandied by retorting winds such hold upon you, that neither earnest prayers of invitation, nor force of friendships, nor even the most succulent oysters of our pools, suffice to bring you this trifling distance in to Bordeaux, where we have been

expecting you all these days? Is it that the hardships of a winter journey deter you? those wild winds of Bigorre will often obliterate the soft tracks, and perhaps
2 you dread a kind of shipwreck upon land? If so, your memory is short; how long ago was it that Gibraltar was conquered by your bold foot? or that your camp was pitched on the uttermost shores of Cadiz? or the last goal of great wanderings reached, common to Hercules and to my Trygetius? Are you grown such a traitor to your proper nature as to abandon yourself wholly to sloth, you who once ranged the lands of mystery and fable, you whose limbs might fail, but never your
3 indefatigable purpose? Yet with such a record, you come down to Langon harbour [1] crawling with no less reluctance than one bound for the Danube to resist the all-invading Massagetae, or for the dull flood of Nile with all its awful crocodiles. If a bare twelve miles can so delay you, what would you have done had you been with Marcus Cato on his marches through the deserts of Leptis? [2]

4 You shiver, it seems, at the mere name of the winter months; but I can assure you we enjoy the gentlest, mildest, and clearest skies, where the lightest breezes serve as winds; so nominal a winter season should less deter than the temperate reality attract. But if my letter of invitation leaves you still obdurate, you shall not resist the verses which in two days' time shall go forth to the attack, more insidious in persuasion, yet I trust none the less strenuous agents of my wishes.
5 My friend Leontius, first of all our Aquitanians, with Paulinus, worthy son of worthy sire, are to meet you with the falling tide on the Garonne at the appointed

place; so that not only the boats, but the very river itself shall come out with them to greet you. The oarsmen at the thwarts, the steersmen on the poops, shall tune their chants to sing your praises. They shall pile high for you a couch of cushions, there shall be a board set with men of two colours[1]; the dice shall await you, ready to be thrown and thrown again from the ivory steps of the boxes. A pine-wood grating shall be fixed across the bottom of the boat so that the bilge flowing to and fro shall never wet your dangling foot; a wicker screen above shall protect you from the treacherous winter sun. What more could 6
the most pampered of the indolent expect than to find himself at his destination before he seemed well under weigh? A truce to your objections and delays; I could swear that the snail with his house on his back would easily outstrip you. And to think that there is a store-room at your command crammed with piles of the most exquisite delicacies and only wanting an enterprise to do it justice! Come, then, to be enter- 7
tained or to entertain; or, best of all, to do both; come with all your armoury of Mediterranean fare to crush and subjugate the finely equipped gourmets of Médoc.[2] On our battle-ground let us see the fish of Adour triumph over the mullets of Garonne, and our coarse crew of crabs fall back before the lobster-armies of Bayonne. Join battle after this wise with the rest of us; but if you value my opinion, take a veteran's advice as a wise man should, and leave my senatorial host out of the contest; if you once come beneath his hospitable roof, you will feast as if you enjoyed continual feasts or the banquets of a Cleopatra. His

own and his country's honour will be involved in the competition; and it is generally agreed that he surpasses all his rivals just as far as his city leaves all other cities behind. Farewell.

XIII

To the Lord Bishop Nunechius

A.D. 472–4

1 No one, most blessed father, rejoices more than I over the number and variety of virtues with which you are so richly endowed by Heaven. You are described as a man of birth who is never arrogant, a man of influence who makes a blameless use of power, a man of piety untouched by superstition. You are praised as one who is learned without airs and serious without fatuity; one whose wit is never rehearsed, who is courteous, but knows his mind, and sociable without any love of popularity.

2 And not content with allowing you these qualities, Fame crowns them with another of yet higher degree, the supreme gift of charity—Fame who, however she may sing your praises, must leave the greater part unsung. For though she can explain to distant friends the aim of your good deeds, their number is beyond the powers of her relation. The tale of them fires me now to make you a first advance, as a conscious inferior should. I therefore proceed to pay my homage; hitherto I might so justly have been accused of backwardness, that I have no apprehension now of being considered forward.

3 I commend to your kindness the bearer Promotus,

whom you already know, and whom your prayers have now made my fellow penitent. Though by birth a Jew, he has preferred to be numbered with those chosen by faith rather than blood; he has sought the franchise of the heavenly city; by grace of the Spirit which makes alive he has rejected the letter that kills. Considering, on the one hand, the rewards laid up for the just, on the other the punishment, endless as eternity, awaiting him who dares not desert the Circumcision for the camp of Christ, he has made up his mind to be accounted no longer a citizen of the Solyma on earth, but a son of the Holy Jerusalem which is above. Which thing per- 4
ceiving, let now the spiritual Sara take to her maternal arms the truer son of Abram; for he ceased to belong to the handmaid Hagar when he exchanged the servitude of conformity according to law for the freedom which comes of grace. The special reason for his journey you will more conveniently learn from his own lips. To me he will always be very dear for the cause above related; I have dwelled upon it because the most effective introduction of all is that which simply sets forth a man's indisputable claim to be well received. Deign to hold us in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

XIV

To the Lord Bishop Principius

A. D. 472–4

THOUGH I have never seen your face, venerable father, 1
for a long time I have seen the effect of your activities. The praise of such saintliness as yours is widely spread;

it overleaps mere bounds of space; and just as the influence of a great character knows no bound, so no term is set
2 to the range of a noble reputation. You will put this all down as my exaggeration unless I adduce in support of my statement some competent witness. I therefore cite a revered member of the famous brotherhood at Lerins,[1] a contemporary there with Maximus and Lupus, one who went such lengths in renunciation that he might claim to rival the archimandrites[2] of Memphis or the Holy Land. I mean Bishop Antiolus, who was the first to tell me about your father and brothers, and the high example which both of you set in the exercise of your exalted functions in the Church; his account of you first kindled in me the desire to know a story, familiarity with which has ever since
3 been my delight. One might almost compare your father to Aaron the High Priest of old, whom his brother, the Lawgiver, first anointed with the oil of sanctification in the midst of the people in the wilderness, calling next his sons to the same sacred office. But Aaron's happiness in Ithamar and Eleazar was marred when Nadab and Abihu were destroyed by lightning; they were cut off and punished in the flesh, but we may believe that in the spirit they had absolution.
4 I never heard that you offer strange fire when you come to lay your hands upon the altar; rather with the censer of the heart you burn a glowing incense, offering the sacrifices of chastity and love. As often as with the cords of exhortation you bind the yoke of the law upon the necks of the proud, so often in spirit do you sacrifice bulls to the Lord. As often as with the goad of your rebuke you drive sinners polluted by the rankness of

sensual indulgence to the sweet savour of a modest life, so often do you offer rank goats in the sight of Christ. As often as your rebuke leads the soul to sigh in 5
penance and compunction over the committed fault, who shall doubt that you present in mystic sacrifice the pair of turtle-doves and the two young pigeons which by their number and their plaints symbolize the twofold nature of man? As often as your warning voice moves the glutton to parch by fire of frequent fastings his gross body and heaving swollen stomach, who shall doubt that you consecrate, as it were, the finest flour in the pan of continence? Every time that 6
you persuade a sinner to renounce the vanities of misbelief, to profess right doctrine, to hold the faith, to keep the way, or to hope for eternal life, who doubts that in the making of a convert triply freed from heresy, hypocrisy, and schism, you dedicate the purest shewbread with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth? Who, in fine, is not aware that the corporeal sacrifice 7
slain as type under the Law is more than replaced by the spiritual sacrifice which you offer under grace? That is why I give abundant thanks to God for your letter, from which I perceive that although the aforesaid prelate told me great things of you, there were greater things which he left unsaid. I am persuaded that you who seem so admirable in other men's description, and more admirable yet in your own letter, will prove best of all seen face to face.

The clerk, Megethius, who brought your message, 8
has satisfactorily concluded his affairs, and carries back my respects. I fear I may be of little practical use to him, but if good wishes avail, he has mine. Through

him I urgently entreat your brother and yourself frequently to quench my thirst with a stream of your most literary letters, and you must write the oftener of the two. If the difficulties of the road and the distance between us prove an obstacle to my desires, at least pray sometimes for those who ask your prayers. Honoured though I should be by your regular correspondence, your occasional prayers promise me something more than honours, they promise me salvation. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

XV

To the Lord Bishop Prosper

A. D. 478 (?)

1 You wished me to celebrate the glory of the holy Annianus, the greatest and most perfect of prelates, equal to Lupus, and no unworthy rival of Germanus; you would fain see graven on the hearts of all the faithful the memory of a character so fine, so eminent, so richly endowed with so many virtues and so many merits, to which I myself should like to add this, that he made way for such a successor as yourself. You exacted a promise from me at the same time that I would hand down for the benefit of those who come after us the history of the war with Attila, with the whole tale of the siege and assault of Orleans when the city was attacked and breached, but never laid in ruins, and the bishop's celebrated prophecy was divinely answered from
2 above.[1] I actually set to work upon the book; but when I grasped the extent of my undertaking I repented of

having ever begun; I therefore suffered no one else to hear a work which my own judgement already condemned. But to the first part of your request I can return a different answer: your wishes, and the merit of that great bishop make it my duty to enhance his fame without delay by every means within my power. I only ask you, as a fair creditor, to treat with laudable indulgence this promise of your reckless debtor, and in that other matter to refrain from asking what I must refrain from attempting to do. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

XVI

To his friend Constantius

c. A. D. 478

I PROMISED the illustrious Petronius to conclude this 1
little book in a few letters; but in endeavouring to spare you, I have been very hard on him. He was to have the drudgery of revision, you the honour of the issue; the responsibility of conveying the volume to you was to be his, the pleasure of paying the homage mine. I have carried out my intention; if you will cast your practised eye over the numerous superscriptions I think you will be struck by the manner in which the pages are filled. I have reached the very margins near the *umbilicus*; as the Satirist says, it is time to finish my Orestes [1], even if I have to write on the other side of the parchment.

In this work I have not been classical, or enlisted 2
in my service a fabulous Terpsichore, nor have I led

my pen by dewy banks and mossy rocks to the well-spring of Aganippe. I only hope that what I have written may not prove rambling pointless stuff, and full of trivial commonplaces. For an accomplished reader like yourself can take no pleasure in an invertebrate, soft and enervated style; what he requires is something nervous and masculine in the antique manner. Those qualities must be left to a greater talent than mine; enough for me, if you forgive me for keeping you waiting so long.

3 It is fortunate that our illustrious friend requested no further additions; that would have involved me in long delays, for not a single cabinet or case contains anything more worth production. This will show you that although my time of silence is still to come, I have certainly begun to think of it, and that for two reasons. If I win approval, I shall give my readers pleasure at the smallest cost to themselves; if, on the other hand, I am disapproved, their weariness will soon be over. For my style has no polished graces; it is of a positively
4 heathen bluntness. What use should I have, indeed, for an austere archaic manner, or for far-fetched terms of Salii or Sibyls, or the old Sabine Cures?[1] Such things the masters for the most part avoid; they are for some flamen to expound, or some antiquated reader of the law's conundrums. My diction is dry and jejune; mine is a vocabulary of common words in too general use to claim distinction, too ready to every one's
5 hand to find acceptance with the critical. If my writing lacks eloquence and force, I can confidently say that it contains nothing which is not genuine and absolutely true to fact. Why should I insist upon the point?

If my style pleases my friends, it is good enough for me. I am content with either kind of verdict: they may either be critical and tell me the truth, or partial and deceive themselves. All I shall ask of Providence in future is that posterity may judge or be deceived in the same manner. Farewell.

BOOK IX

I

To his friend Firminus

AFTER A. D. 480

1 You insist, my honoured Son, that I should exceed the existing limit of my collected letters; that I should adventure further, and refuse to content myself with the present total. Your reason in favour of adding a ninth volume is that Pliny, in whose steps you deem me to follow in this work, assigns the same term to his own
2 collection.[1] I may yield to your desire; but all the same, this friendly invitation raises difficulties, and is far from promising advantage to such poor reputation as I already possess. In the first place, it is very late in the day to append this new addition to the volume already issued. Secondly, I do not know the umpire who would not hold it indecent in an author to give
3 a single work three supplements. Nor, having definitely announced the work done, should I know what excuse to make for not curbing my incorrigible loquacity, unless indeed it were this, that one cannot constrain one's friendships as one can limit one's page. For these reasons, I think you ought to stand on guard before my reputation, and make my motives clear to the inquisitive; I should like you to send me regular intelligence of the views
4 expressed by those whose opinions I should value. If

after forcing me to chatter on, you yourself persevere in silence, you will have no fair ground for complaint if I pay you out in your own coin. It is incumbent on you above all others to be lenient in judging my endeavour to fulfil the task and obligation imposed upon me. Meanwhile, I will at once insert in the margin of the eighth book any fresh letter which comes into my hands.

Apollinaris, all ardour in most pursuits, is utterly 5
remiss in one; study has but a faint attraction for him, whether he reads by his own choice or by compulsion. At least, that is how it appears to me, since I count myself one of those fathers who are so eager, so ambitious, and so apprehensive about the progress of their sons that they hardly ever find anything to commend, or if they do, are hardly ever satisfied. Farewell.

II

To the Lord Bishop Euphronius

c. A.D. 472

THE missive with your saintly greeting has been 1
delivered by the priest Albiso and the Levite[1] Proculus, whom I may accept as my masters in conduct, since they have proved themselves your worthy pupils. The letter does me a great honour, but it imposes a yet greater burden. Although your benediction delights me, the accompanying injunction fills me with dismay. Indeed, I am so perturbed that I cannot think even of a partial obedience. You bid me attempt too intricate a task, and much too far beyond my capacity. At a time when my powers wane towards their end, I am to essay

a work which I should be mad to begin and could
2 never hope to finish. If I know your loyal heart aright, your real aim was rather to give me proof of your affection than to see my completed labours. But I shall take good care that while from Jerome, the master of exegesis, Augustine, the master of dialectic, and Origen, the master of allegory, you reap full ears of spiritual emotion and a harvest of saving doctrine, that no dry stubble shall rustle in your ears from this parched tongue of mine. As well blend the hoarse cry of the goose with the swan's music, or the sparrow's impudent chirp with the tuneful plaint of
3 nightingales. Should I not show a certain effrontery and want of proper feeling were I to approach so formidable a task—I, a novice in the Church, but a veteran, alas! in transgression—I, light in learning, but weighed down by a heavy conscience? If I were to send what I had written to be seen by other eyes, I should become the laughing-stock even of critics who never set eyes on me.

I entreat you, therefore, my Lord Bishop, not to insist on spoiling a modesty which would fain avoid publicity, or tempt me into so rash an adventure. Such is the envy of the backbiters, that a mere beginning is more sure of their censure than a successful conclusion of their applause. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

III

To the Lord Bishop Faustus

c. A.D. 477

YOUR old loyalty to a friend, and your old mastery 1
of diction are both unchanged; I admire equally the heartiness of your letters, and the perfect manner of their expression. But I think, and I am sure that you will concur with me, that at the present juncture, when the roads are no longer secure owing to the movements of the peoples, the only prudent and safe course is to abandon for the present any regular exchange of messages; we must be less assiduous correspondents; we must learn the art of keeping silence. This is a bitter deprivation, and hard to bear when a friendship is as close as ours; it is imposed upon us not by casual circumstance, but by causes at once definite, inevitable, and diverse in their origin.

First among them I must set the examination of all 2
letter-carriers upon the highways. Messengers may run small personal risk, since nothing can be alleged against them; but they have to put up with endless annoyance, while some vigilant official subjects them to an inquisitorial search. At the first sign of faltering in reply to questions, they are suspected of carrying in their heads instructions which cannot be found upon their persons. The sender of a letter is thus placed in an awkward position, and the bearer is liable to rough usage, especially at a time like this, when fresh disputes between rival nationalities have destroyed a treaty of long duration. In the second place I set the soreness of 3

my heart over my own private troubles, for I was taken from home with a show of great consideration, but really removed by compulsion to this distant spot, where I am broken by every kind of mental anguish, enduring all the hardships of an exile and the losses of a proscript. It is therefore by no means the right moment to ask me for finished letters, and were I to attempt them, it would be impertinence, for the exchange of a lively or elaborate correspondence should be confined to happy people; to me it seems little less than a barbarism for a man to write gaily when his spirit is vexed within
4 him. How much better it would be for you to give the benefit of your unremitting orisons to a soul conscious of its guilt and trembling as often as it recalls the debts of a sinful career! For you are versed in the prayers of the Island brotherhood, which you transferred from the wrestling-place of the hermit congregation, and from the assembly of the monks of Lerins,[1] to the city over whose church you preside, for all your episcopal rank, an abbot still in spirit, and refusing to make your new dignity a pretext for any relaxation in the rigour of the ancient discipline. Obtain for me, then, by your most potent intercession that my portion may be in the Lord; that enrolled from henceforth among the companies of my tribesmen the Levites, I may cease to be of the earth earthly, I to whom not a yard of earth remains;[2] and that I may begin to estrange myself from the guilt of this world, as I am already estranged from its riches.
5 In the third place, and perhaps this after all is the chief reason why I have given up writing to you, I have a boundless admiration for your tropical figurative style, and for that consummately varied and perfected diction

of which your last letter affords such ample evidence. Many years ago I sat a hoarse demonstrative listener when you preached either extempore, or, if occasion demanded, after careful preparation. I especially remember the week's festival of the dedication of the church at Lyons, when you were called upon by the general desire of your venerable colleagues to deliver an oration. On that occasion you proved yourself a master both of forensic and religious eloquence, and held the balance between them with such perfection that we hung upon your words with ears strained and roused emotions; you cared less to indulge our simple predilections because you knew that you had wholly satisfied our reason.

There you have the cause of my present and my 6
future silence; I could not refuse a few words without disobedience, but henceforward I shall hold my peace and learn in silence. In future the word lies with you, my Lord Bishop. It is yours to devote yourself to the teaching of sound and perfect doctrine in works destined to live; for not a man hears you in argument or exposition who does not learn to deserve the praise of others in deed no less than word. Forgive my simple letter,[1] which has at least the virtue of conforming to your desires; I have myself to admit that, by comparison with yours, my style is inarticulate as a child's. But there is little point in all this heavy 7
repetition; the most foolish thing in the world is to be always deprecating one's own follies. Judgement rests with you, and if you put things to a thorough test, you will find much to laugh at, and even more to censure. I shall welcome it if your notorious kindness of heart allows you for once to abandon your dislike of

being critical, and condemn such points as need correction. Only if you strike out passages here and there, shall I have the satisfaction of feeling that you approve what you leave intact. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

IV

To the Lord Bishop Graecus

A. D. 473 (?)

1 Our traveller and bearer of mutual salutations treads a path of which he knows every yard from having to traverse over and over again the roads and tracts between our several cities. We ourselves must keep to the ideal set before us; we ought, indeed, to be more intent on it than ever, and redouble our zeal now that so many messengers are constantly upon the way, and above all, Amantius. If we fail in this, it will look as if we corresponded just because he regularly calls for letters, and not because we really wish to write them. You must think more often of the friends among whose number I venture to count myself; all of us feel no less elated by your good, than depressed by your adverse
2 fortune. Were we not moved to sympathetic tears by the mournful story of your anguish at the fate of certain brethren? Flower of the priesthood, jewel among pontiffs, mighty in learning, in righteousness mightier yet, spurn from you the threatening waves of earthly storms, for we have often heard from your own lips that the way to the promised feasts of patriarchs and the celestial nectar lies through the bitter cups of earthly

sorrows. Whether he will or no, each follower of the Mediator who endured the world's contempt must follow his Lord's example. Whatever draughts of trouble the affliction of this present life sets to our lips, we shall perceive how small our burden is if we will but remember what He who calls us to His heaven once drank upon the tree. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

V

To the Lord Bishop Julianus

c. A.D. 477

THOUGH we dwell further apart than either of us could 1
wish, the distance dividing us has had less to do with the interruption of our intercourse than the fact that we live under different laws; national disagreements born of opposing interests have hindered our frequent correspondence. But now that a peace has been concluded,[1] and the two peoples are to become trusty allies, our letters will be able to pass in greater numbers since they will arouse no more suspicion. Unite your prayers, 2
then, with those of your reverend brothers, that Christ may deign to prosper our handiwork, restraining the quarrels of our princes, making their wars to cease, granting to them the gift of good intention, to us peace, and to all security. Deign to hold us in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VI

To the Lord Bishop Ambrose

AFTER A. D. 472

1 YOUR holiness has interceded before Christ with effect on behalf of our well-beloved friend (I will not mention his name—you will know whom I mean), the laxity of whose youth you used sometimes to lament before a few chosen witnesses of your sorrow, sometimes to bemoan in silence and alone. For he has suddenly broken off his relations with the shameless slave-girl to whose low fascination he had utterly abandoned his life; by this prompt reformation he has taken a great step in the interests of his estate, of his
2 descendants, and of himself. He dissipated his inheritance until his coffers were empty; but when he once began to consider his position, and understood how much of his patrimony the extravagance of his domestic Charybdis had swallowed up, not a moment too soon he took the bit in his teeth, shook his head, and stopping his ears, as one might say, with Ulysses' wax, he was deaf to the voice of evil, and escaped the shipwreck that follows meretricious lures. He has led to the altar a maid of high birth and ample fortune, and
3 for that we must give him credit. It would of course have been a greater glory to have abandoned the voluptuous life without taking to himself a wife; but few of those who forsake error at the call of virtue can begin upon the highest level, and after indulging themselves in everything, cut off all indulgence at one stroke.

4 It is now your part by assiduous prayer to obtain for

the newly married couple good hope of issue; and then, when they have one or two children (perhaps even in that we concede too much), to see to it that this stealer of unlawful joys shall abstain thereafter even from lawful pleasures. At present the conduct of this bride and bridegroom is so seemly that to see them once together is enough to reveal the gulf between the honourable love of a wife and the feigned endearments of the concubine. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VII

To the Lord Bishop Remigius

A.D. 472–4 (?)

ONE of our citizens of Clermont (I know the man, 1
but forget his business, which is immaterial) went recently on a journey to Belgic Gaul, and while at Rheims so won your copyist or your bookseller by the charms of his manner or of his purse that he wormed out of him, without your consent, a complete set of your *Declamations*. After his triumphant return with such a splendid spoil of volumes, he insisted on presenting the whole series to us as his fellow townsmen, though we were quite ready to purchase them—a rather graceful act. All of us here who are devoted to literature were properly desirous of reading the books, and we at once began to transcribe the whole, committing to memory as much as we were able. It was the universal 2
opinion that there were few men living who could write as you do. There are few or none who before even beginning to write could arrange their subjects so well, so calculate the position of syllables, or the juxta-

position of consonant and vowel; and besides, there is none whose illustrations are so apposite, whose statements are so trustworthy, whose epithets are so appropriate, whose allusions so full of charm, whose arguments are so sound, whose sentiments carry such weight, whose diction has such a flow, whose periods come to so fulmi-
3 nant a conclusion. The framework is always stout and firm, bound with many a delightful transition, and close caesura, but withal quite easy and smooth, and rounded to perfection; it helps the reader's tongue to pass without obstacle, so as never to be troubled by rough divisions, or roll in stammering accents on the palate. All is fluent and ductile; it is as when the finger glides lightly over a surface of polished crystal or onyx, where there is not the slightest crack
4 or fissure to stay its passage. I have said enough. There is no orator alive whom your masterful skill would not enable you easily to surpass and leave far behind. I almost dare to suspect (forgive my audacity) that a flow of eloquence so copious and so far beyond my powers of description must sometimes make you vain. But do not think that because you shine with the twofold brilliance of your holy life and your consummate style you can therefore disregard our opinion; remember that though our authorship may be
5 worth little, our criticism may count for much. In future, then, cease to evade our judgement, from which you have nothing either mordant or aggressive to fear. For I must warn you that if you leave our barrenness unenriched by the stream of your eloquence, we shall take our revenge by engaging the services of burglars, whose clever hands will soon despoil your roll-cases

with our connivance and support. If you are imperturbable before a friendly request to-day, you will soon learn what perturbation means to-morrow, when the thieves have cleared your shelves. Deign to keep me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

VIII

To the Lord Bishop Principius

A. D. 472–474

I WAS longing for a line from you when quite unex- 1
pectedly our old messenger brought me your answer; his efficiency in the present case proves him a fit and proper person to be entrusted with our further correspondence. Your second letter is a gift, or rather blessing, which I repay with my further greetings: the account is now numerically but far from qualitatively equal. And since we live in spiritual communion, while our 2
homes are remote, so that we are debarred by our situation from the pleasure of meeting, pray for me, that I may be released from the burden and travail of this present life by a holy death such as my heart desires, and that when the day of Judgement dawns and the dead are raised, I may join your throng a servitor, were it even on the terms of the Gibeonites[1]. For in accordance with the divine promise, the sons of God shall come together from every nation, and if pardon be given to my grievous sin, however diverse my deserts, I shall not be separated far from the place where glory awaits you among the saints. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

IX

To the Lord Bishop Faustus

AFTER A. D. 475

1 You have lamented our long silence, venerable father, but while I recognize and applaud your desire that it should at last be broken, I cannot admit that any blame attaches to me. When you bade me some time back give you my news, I wrote before receiving your last communication, and my letter actually reached Riez; but though you were at Apt, you aptly escaped its perusal.[1] I was most anxious, both to receive my due credit for having written, and to escape too severe
2 a criticism when you read the missive. But on this point I need say no more at present, especially as you again ask me for a letter, and one as voluminous as I can make it. I long to satisfy you; the goodwill is there, but unfortunately I have no subject for my pen. Greetings should take up little space, unless they introduce some matter of real interest; to spin them out with mere verbiage, is to deflect from the path defined by Sallust when he said that Catiline had words enough but little wisdom.[2] So my *vale* will have to follow my *ave* at an exceedingly short interval. I beseech your prayers for me.

3 What a stroke of luck! Just as I was on the point of folding up my letter, something has occurred for me to write about, and if either the pleasure or the annoyance of the event delays my protest a single moment, I will own myself deserving of the indignity to which I have been exposed. You have fallen into my hands, Great Master,

I do more than triumph ; I have you at my mercy, and in my captive I find one of no less stature than the anticipations of years had led me to expect. I cannot say whether you are caught against your will, but it looks like it. For if you did not mean your books to pass me without my knowledge, you certainly did nothing to prevent the passage. It aggravates the offence that in traversing Auvergne they not merely went close under my walls but almost grazed my person. Were you afraid that I should be jealous? Thank God, 4
I am less open to the charge of envy than any other ; and were it otherwise, were I as guilty of this as of other defects, the hopelessness of a successful rivalry would be enough to purge me of emulation. Did you fear the frown of so severe and difficult a critic as your servant? What critic so swollen or so opinionated as not to kindle at your least ardent passages! Was 5
it your low estimate of a junior that led you to ignore and to disdain me? I hardly think it. Was it that you thought me ignorant? I could put up with that if you mean ignorant of the art of writing, not ignorant in appreciation. I must remind you that only those who have taken part in the games presume to pass judgement on the racing chariots. Was there any casual disagreement between us, leading you to suppose that I might decry your work? Thanks be to God, my worst enemies cannot make me out a lukewarm friend. Why waste these words? you ask. Well, I will now 6
let you have the whole story of this secretiveness which so incensed me, and of the discovery which has put me in such high spirits again. I had read those works of yours which Riochatus the priest and monk,[1] and

thus twice a stranger and pilgrim in this world, was taking back for you to your Bretons; for you, who may well be called Faustus to-day, since you cannot grow old, since you will always live in the mouths of men, and after your bodily death, attain immortality by your works. The venerable man made some stay in our city, waiting till the agitated main of peoples should calm down, for at that time the vast whirlwind of wars rose dreadful against us on this side and on that. All your other good gifts he freely produced; but managed to keep back, always with the most exquisite courtesy, the chief treasure he conveyed, unwilling perhaps to let me feel the contrast between your roses and my brambles.

7 After rather more than two months, he hurriedly left us, a rumour having got abroad that he and his company had with them mysterious things of great price, carefully wrapped up from view. I went after him with horses swift enough easily to cancel the day's start he had gained; I came up with my felon, I leapt at his throat with a kiss, laughing like a man but pouncing like a wild beast; I resembled a robbed tigress that with winged feet springs like a flash upon the neck of the Parthian

8 hunter to dash her stolen cub from his grasp.[1] To cut the story short, I embraced the knees of my captive friend; I stopped the horses, tied the bridles, opened his baggage, discovered the volume I sought,[2] dragged it forth in triumph, and began reading away and dismembering it by making lengthy excerpts from the important chapters. I dictated as fast as I could, and the skill of my secretaries yet further abbreviated my task, for they were able to skip letters wholesale, using a system of substituted signs. The story of our parting would be

an overlong tale, and after all of no great interest; our cheeks were wet with tears; we embraced and embraced again, hardly able to tear ourselves away. My exultation was justified by my safe return, laden with the spoils of loving-kindness and master of great riches for the soul.

And now for my opinion of this booty. I should 9
rather like to hold it back, in order to keep you in suspense; judgement withheld were vengeance more complete. But I despair of taking down your pride; for you are conscious of so masterly an eloquence that sheer delight in what they read wrings eulogy from your readers, whether they wish to withstand the charm or not. Listen, then, to the sentence which an injured friend now passes on your book. It is a work of the 10
most fruitful labour, varied, ardent, sublime, excellent in classification, rich in apt examples, well balanced by its form as dialogue, and by the fourfold division of its subject. There is much that is inspiring, much that is grand; here I find simplicity without clumsiness, there point not too far-fetched; grave matters are handled with ripe judgement, deep matters with proper caution; on debatable ground you take firm stand; in controversy your argument is always ready. Now persuasive, now severe, always intent to edify, you write with eloquence, with force, and with exquisite discrimination.

Following you over the whole wide field traversed in 11
so many manners, I find you easily superior to all other writers alike in conception and in execution. You must appreciate my sincerity in this the more, when you remember that I pronounce my opinion under the smart

of your affront. I think your work could only be improved by one thing—your presence in person to read it, when something might yet be added by the author's own voice, his gesture, his restrained art of
12 physical expression. Endowed thus with all these intellectual and literary gifts, you have united yourself with a fair woman according to the precept of Deuteronomy.[1] You saw her among the hostile squadrons; and then and there you loved her as she stood in the forefront of the adversary's battle; through all the resistance of the foe, you bore her off in the strong arm of passion. Her name is Philosophy, she it is whom you snatched by force from among the impious arts; and having shorn the locks betokening a false faith, with the eyebrows arched with pride of earthly learning, and cut away the folds of her ancient vesture, which are the folds of sad dialectic, veiling perverse and unlawful conversation, you purified her and joined her
13 to you in a close and mystical embrace. She has been your faithful follower from your early years; she was ever at your side, whether you practised your skill in the arena of the crowded city, or subdued the flesh in remote solitudes; in the Athenaeum she was with you, and in the monastery; with you she abjured the wisdom of the world, with you proclaims that which is from above. Whoever provokes you as her lawful spouse shall soon perceive the noble range of your philosophy, and find himself confronted by the Platonic Academy
14 of the Church of Christ. He shall hear you first declare the ineffable omniscience of God and the eternity of the Holy Spirit. He shall not see you grow long hair or flaunt the pallium or staff as insignia

of the philosophic state. He shall not see you pride yourself in nice apparel, indulging the exquisite's pretension, or making squalor your boast. He shall not see you betray your envy when in the gymnasia, or the Schools of the Areopagus; Speusippus is pictured for admiring eyes with bowed head, Aratus with open countenance; Zeno with contracted brows, Epicurus with unwrinkled skin, Diogenes with hirsute beard, Socrates with failing hair, Aristotle with arm freed from the mantle, Xenocrates with his contracted leg, Heraclitus with his eyes closed by tears, Democritus with lips parted in a laugh, Chrysippus counting with clenched fingers, Euclid measuring with open hands, Cleanthes biting his nails over problems both of space and number.[1] Far from 15
all this, whoever challenges you shall see the Stoic, the Cynic, the Peripatetic, the Heresiarch all beaten with their own weapons and crushed by their own devices. Their followers who dare resist Christian faith and dogma to venture a bout with you shall soon be bound hand and foot and fall headlong into the toils of their own nets. The barbed syllogisms of your logic shall hook these voluble tongues even while they seek escape; you shall noose their slippery problems in categoric coils after the fashion of the clever doctor, who, if need be, will prepare his antidote for poison from the very venom of the serpent. I have said enough for the moment 16
on your spiritual insight and on the soundness of your learning. For no one can follow in your footsteps with an equal stride, since to no other is it given to speak better than the masters who taught him, and to make his actions better than his words. Not without reason shall you be called by those qualified to judge,

most blessed above all in our generation, as one who in deed and word enjoys a great and twofold glory; who after numbering years to be counted on the right hand,[1] after being the model of this century and the desire of every other, shall die honoured for his excellence in every field, leaving his possessions to his own folk, and himself to the nations of the world. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

X

To the Lord Bishop Apprunculus

AFTER A.D. 475 (?)

1 My letter was delivered to you by a messenger who ought to have brought me back a reply; for our brother Celestius, on his return recently from Béziers, extracted from me a document of surrender relating to my [clerk] Injuriosus. I wrote it urged by the compelling force of your modesty rather than by any inclination of my own; the least that I could do, confronted with such an attitude was to meet you halfway upon the swift feet of my
2 respect. Regard him, then, as yours by my deliberate act, but use him with generosity; indeed, I am sure you proposed nothing but the solace of your kindness. I have no further resentment against him, and write this rather as an introduction to you than as a formal dimissal for him. But I should like it to be a condition that he is to render you obedient service and assistance, and that if he stays with you he shall be regarded as neither yours nor mine; but that if he leaves you, it shall be open to both of us to treat him as a fugitive.[2] Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

XI

To the Lord Bishop Lupus

A. D. 478 (?)

THAT unfortunate book which you regard as sent not 1
so much to you as through you, has inspired a letter
which I in my turn regard as written not so much to me
as against me.[1] I cannot reply to your reproaches with
an eloquence equal to yours; I rely only on the justice
of my cause; how indeed am I to plead 'not guilty'
when you imply the opposite? At the very outset,
therefore, I frankly ask your pardon for my offence,
such as it is; but I confess only to an error born of
diffidence and by no means of improper pride. The 2
strictness of your judgement is no less formidable to me
in literary than in moral questions, but I must admit
that when I opened the volume it was the thought of
the friendship you profess for me which oppressed me
most. And that I think is natural; for it is human
nature for a friend who suspects an injury to be severer
than any one else. It is true enough, as you point out, 3
that my book is a medley packed and piled with multi-
farious subjects, episodes and personal facts; it would
have been outrageous had I been so infatuated with my
work as to imagine that no part of it would displease you.
Whatever your judgement might prove to be, it was
evident that I should derogate from my loyalty, if
I failed to give you at least the first sight of the volume,
even though I might not formally present it. If I were
lucky enough to meet with your approval, you could not
accuse me of having arrogantly neglected you; if on the

other hand I were less fortunate, you could not say that
4 I had forced my work upon your notice. Nor did I expect to find it very difficult to excuse the motive which saved me from possibly having to blush for myself. I imagined you to be as well aware as I myself that modesty becomes the writer of a new book better than assurance, and that timidity is far more likely to win the vote of the severe critic than a provocative spirit. On the other hand, if a man boldly announces a volume on a fresh subject, however much he may really have done to satisfy the legitimate expectation of the public, he will soon find that he will be expected to do more. Whatever strictures you may pass on the tenor of this reply, I prefer to make a clean breast of
5 it rather than resort to disingenuous evasions. Any one but myself would probably have argued somewhat after this wise: 'I never gave any one the advantage over you; no one else had received a special letter from me. The man whom you believed to be preferred before you had to be content with one letter to his credit, and that, too, having no relation to the present matter. You on the other hand, for all your complaints at being overlooked, must have been simply exhausted by the three garrulous sheets you received; you must have been sickened by so long an immersion in empty and dull verbiage. Moreover you may not have observed that, even so, your position and your high deserts have received ample consideration; your name appears in the first superscription of the book, as befits that of the primate among our bishops. His name, on the contrary, only occurs once in a letter addressed to himself; yours is so mentioned more than once, and you are cited

besides in letters addressed to other persons. Re- 6
member, too, that where there is a subject likely to please you, I have encouraged you to read it, whereas the person in question can only do so by your kindness; he is probably so embarrassed by your attitude to my little gift that I should be surprised if even now he has had a real chance of perusal, while you long ago reached the stage of transcribing. I expect he will hardly regard as my holograph a copy over which you have glanced; for to an example revised by you he can never impute either excess of barbarisms or defects in punctuation. In fine, it might appear that all rights in the book had been handed over to you, seeing that you have the use of it while you please, and can dispose of it for so long that you may be said to keep it rather in your memory than in your bookcase.' Such arguments, with more of the same kind, might 7
readily be adduced. I, however, shall waive them all, and prefer frankly to seek your pardon instead of making excuses for a problematical offence. I make even less excuse for the carelessness of the present letter, first, because I have no longer the art of fine writing, even if I attempt it; second, because, when one has got a book off one's mind, one is longing for a holiday and cannot bring oneself to elaborate what one does not care to make public. But as I rightly make a point of giving 8
way to you in everything—for where, indeed, is your equal to be found?—and as for ten whole lustres,[1] as often as a comparison has been instituted, you have been preferred to all priests that have ever been, whether in our own time or before it, I would have you understand, that though your lamentations may shake the

stars, though you call the glowing ashes of your fathers to witness my outrage to the laws of friendship, yet if there is to be any contest in mutual affection, my foot shall stand firm against yours, were it for no other reason than that to be beaten in anything is bad, but to be vanquished in loyalty an abomination. Whether you approve or no, I have right on my side in replying by this open declaration to reproaches, which for all their bitterness, are yet more to me than all the honeyed flatteries of others.

9 I have given you as communicative a letter as you could desire. But all my correspondence with you is that; no letters of any writer could be more so. For you have the gift of encouraging men to write with confidence. I say no more of myself; but there is not a literate, however retiring, whom you do not know how to draw out, just as the sun's rays by their absorbent power extract the moisture hidden in the bowels of the earth. So sharp are those rays, that they can penetrate not the fine sand or surface soil alone, but if there be a concealed spring deep under some massive mountain, there too the ardent nature of the mysterious powers of heaven reveals the secret of the liquid element. In like manner, venerated father, your lucid eloquence knows admirably how to influence and draw into the light, by its subtle address, all the studious who from love of quiet, or from modesty, lie in the obscurity of dark corners, their fame yet unawakened.

10 Enough: I come back to the point; I have talked endlessly and at large, but since I have surrendered and confessed my fault, I entreat you to be placable and give me the benefit of your clemency and forgiveness. Such are your holy cheerfulness and love of others that

you will derive a greater pleasure from this my written apology than you would from any positive act of reparation. Deign to hold me in remembrance, my Lord Bishop.

XII

To his friend Oresius

c. A. D. 484

I HAVE just received your letter, which I may com- 1
pare to the salt mined in the hills of Tarragona. The reader finds it sharp and lucid, yet none the less of a bland savour. The phraseology is charming, but the matter is also full of point. Taking small account of my present state of life, it asks me for a new poem, and this demand brings me no less trouble of mind than the admirable diction delight. At the very outset of my religious career, the art of versifying was the first thing that I renounced; gravity of deed was now my business, and if I occupied myself with such frivolous things as verses, I might well be accused of levity. Besides, it is a matter of universal experience that 2
a pursuit which has been intermitted for any time is only resumed with difficulty. Every one knows that both art and artist achieve their highest by constant practice; if the usual exercise be forgone, arm and intellect alike will grow inert. The later or the more seldom the bow is used, the more refractory it is under the hand; it is the same with the ox under his yoke and the horse with his bridle. Moreover, disinclination is not my only motive; it is accompanied by a certain timidity. After three whole Olympiads of silence,[1] to

begin rhyming again would be no less embarrassing than
3 irksome. But it seems almost a crime to refuse you even the most difficult things; your warm heart is quite unused to be denied, and it would be a shame to deceive you of your confident hope. I shall therefore choose a middle path: I will compose nothing new; but if I can find any of my former letters containing poems, written before the pressure of my present duties, you shall have them. I shall merely ask you not to be unfair, and set me down as an incurable poetaster. I shall pride myself just as much on your good opinion if you deign to think of me rather as a modest than as an accomplished man. Farewell.

XIII

To his friend Tonantius

c. A.D. 481

1 I MUST admit that your judgement on my verses has long been too flattering and appreciative: I must admit that you rank me among the elect of poets and even above many of their number. I might be inclined to listen, were not your critical acumen influenced by your friendship. Praises born of partiality, though uttered in perfect
2 good faith, are really based on error. You ask me now to send you some Asclepiads forged on the Horatian anvil, that you may keep yourself in practice by declaiming them at table. I do so, though never in my life have I been so busily engaged in writing prose.

'Long time, with hand well worn by the pen, have I written smooth hendecasyllables which you might

sing more easily than choriambics, dancing on lighter foot to freer measure. But you will that our way should henceforth run by the Calabrian road, where, with reins of mighty music, Flaccus guided his lyric steeds to the melody of Pindar, while the strings were struck to the Glyconian rhythm, to the Alcaic also and the Pherecratian,[1] the Lesbian and the anapaestic; in the freshness of his varied song he went, with words like violets of diverse hue about him. Hard was it for bards of old, hard for me to-day to see that the tongue, essaying the various music of verse, trips not by reason of too many written letters, and their male style which forbids luxuriant graces. Hardly may Leo himself attempt it, king of the Castalian choir; hardly he who most nearly follows him, Lampridius, though he professes prose and verse alike before his students of Bordeaux. Yet this it is which I must try for you: spare me, then, your jests. Suffer your poet to keep to the close his pledge of modesty; for nothing is less excellent than this, to end with laxity where the beginning was with rigour.'

I should personally much prefer that when you divert 3
yourself at the banquet you should confine yourself to pious histories; recite them often among your friends, and let an eager audience encourage their repetition. And if (for you are yet young) these salutary distractions but faintly appeal to you, then borrow from the Platonist of Madaura[2] his formulae of festal questions; and to master them more fully, practise answering them when others propound, or yourself propound them for solution; make this your study

4 even in leisure. But as festive occasions have been mentioned, and you insist upon a poem, even one composed on another theme and for another person, I cannot hesitate to produce one longer. Take, therefore, with what grace you may, one written in Majorian's reign, when a number of us were invited to a banquet by a common acquaintance, and I had to produce something extempore on a book by Petrus, the emperor's secretary,[1] which was just out, the master of the feast delaying the first course awhile for the occasion. My friends Domnulus, Severianus, and Lampridius, summoned from their several homes to a single city,[2] had also been invited, and had to write as I did. That sounds presumptuous; they wrote, of course, far better.

5 We were only granted just time for the allotting of the metres; for we had agreed, as honourable members of the poetical fraternity, that though the subject should be the same for all, the verses of each should be in a different measure, so that the unsuccessful competitors might be spared immediate mortification and subsequent jealousy of the victor. For if all is composed in the same metre, inequality of talent is much more easily detected. I recommend the enclosed to your approval, preferably at some hour of perfect relaxation. It would hardly be fair to subject it to a severe criticism when your friend was never able to give his whole mind to the composition.

* 'Come, flower of youth, called happily together. The place, the hour, the festal board, the theme, bid you extol to the skies the book which you now hear

* The poem is translated into German rhymed decasyllables by Fertig, i, p. 13.

recited, now yourselves recite. It is the book of Petrus, master alike of prose and verse. Brothers, let us celebrate the pious festival of letters. Let all things ministering to delight usher out the day which now moves to its close, fair cheer, and wine and the dance.

Bring out hangings of fine linen ruddy of hue; bring purple steeped with Meliboean dye in brazen vessels to enrich the fleece with purest stain. Let the fabric from a far land display the heights of Ctesiphon and of Niphates,[1] and the wild beasts racing over the field, driven to madness by wounds skilfully feigned in red, from which a blood which is no blood seems to issue, as though a real dart had pierced their sides. There the Parthian fierce of mien and adroit in the backward gaze vanishes on swift steed and turns again to launch a second dart, now flying, now putting in turn to flight the wild beasts' counterfeited forms.

Let the round table be spread with linen purer than snow, and covered with laurel, with ivy and the green growths of the vine. Pile great baskets high with cytisus and crocus, starwort and cassia, privet and marigold; let sideboard and couch be gay with garlands of sweet scent. Let some hand perfumed with balsam smooth your disordered hair; let frankincense of Araby smoke to the lofty roof. Come the dark, let many a light be hung from the glittering ceiling, high in the chamber's upper space; innocent of oil and clammy grease, let each lamp's bowl yield flame from Eastern balms alone.

Let servitors bear in on laden shoulders viands fit for kings, their necks bowed under silver richly chased.

In patera and bowl and cauldron let nard mingle with Falernian wine; let wreaths of roses crown tripod and cup. For we shall tread where garlands sway from many an unguent-vase; in mazy rounds our languid limbs shall know disport; by step, by garb, by voice, each shall play the quivering Maenad. From her seat between two seas let Corinth send her players of the cithara trained in the best of schools[1] to mimetic dance and song; let their tuneful fingers accompany their melodious voices, the plectrum cast aside, and deftly ply the wires that leap to life beneath their touch.

Give us, too, the bronze pipe loved of the nude Satyr; give us deep-sounding flute-players for our chorus, who from cavernous mouth and full-blown cheek shall chant the loud wind into the tubes.

Give us songs for the tragic buskin, for the comic soccus songs; give us eloquence of rhetors and melody of poets, of each in his several part, the best.

Give us all these, yet Petrus shall surpass them all. In our hands is his book woven of prose and verse, faring swift over roughest paths and labyrinthine ways. In every kind he makes essay, in every kind approved; from this side and from that he bears the palm; even learned lips must celebrate his praise. Away with the well of Hippocrene, away with Aganippe's fount; avaunt! Apollo, maker of sweet song, with all thy train of Muses; avaunt! Minerva, arbitress of melody. Away with all the names of legend; one God alone has dowered him with these gifts.

When this man raised his voice, all sat dumb—emperor and senator, warrior, knight, and all the folk

of Romulus. And still their acclamations roll through forum, temple, camp, and country, while Po and Liguria's loyal cities add their loud plaudits to the chorus. Like greetings echo through the towns of Rhône, even the wild Iberian shall imitate the Gaul. Nor shall the sound die in this region of earth; it shall press onward to the lands where Eurus reigns; Zephyr, Aquilo, and Auster shall bear it on their wings.'

Seeking a song for your lips, I have found one of 6
my own. These trifles I drag into the light from the bottom of my desk, where for well-nigh twenty years they have lain for the rats and mice to gnaw: such verses as Ulysses might have found when he came home from Troy. I pray you give me gracious pardon for this distraction of an idle hour; it is surely neither false modesty nor impudence which begs you to bow before the force of precedent, and judge my small performance in the spirit with which I judged the whole book of my friend. Farewell.

XIV

To his friend Burgundio

(No indication of date)

It doubles my own pain to learn that you too are 1
driven to keep your bed. No fate is so hard to bear as the separation of friends through sickness, when they are quite close to each other. Unless they share one room, they cannot exchange a word of mutual comfort or offer a prayer together. Each has burden of anxiety

enough on his own account, but a greater for his friend. However ill a man may be, his fears for himself vanish
2 before the knowledge of his friend's danger. But God, most affectionate son, has relieved me of my worst disquietude, since you begin to regain strength. They say you even want to get up, and what I long even more to hear, that you are strong enough to do so. I really think you must be, or you would not have begun to ask my advice again, and set me literary problems with the ardour of one perfectly recovered. Though you are only a convalescent, you seem far more inclined for some ethical discourse of Socrates, than any physical treatise of Hippocrates. Verily you deserve, if ever man did, the encouragement of Rome's applauding hands, the thunder of the Athenaeum hailing you master, till the
3 seats shake with the clamour through every tier. And were but peace ours, and the roads free, these triumphs you would attain, given the opportunity of forming yourself in the society of our senatorial youth. Of such fame and such distinction I judge you capable from the becoming speech you recently made ; you delivered extempore the matter of a written discourse, with the result that the kindly acclaimed you, the supercilious marvelled, the most accomplished had no fault to find. But I ought not to embarrass your modesty by impertinent excess of praise ; my eulogies are better made to third persons than to yourself. I will proceed to the real subject of my letter.

4 The inquiry which your messenger brings is: what do I mean by recurrent verses? you want an immediate answer, with a concrete illustration. A recurrent verse is one which reads the same backwards and forwards

without changing the position of a single letter, or making any alteration in the metre.[1] Here is the classic example :

Roma tibi subito motibus ibit amor.

[Here is another :

Sole medere pede, ede perede melos.]

There is another kind in which, though the metre is 5
unchanged, only the words are read backwards, not the several letters. A distich of my own shall illustrate the point, though I am sure I have met with many others in the course of my reading. I amused myself by composing it about a brook which had been filled by sudden rain storms, crossing the highway with a noisy rush of waters, and overflowing all the tilled lands below.

It was merely a passing flood, swollen with transient 6
rains, and not sustained by any perennial flow from spring above. I happened to arrive by the road, and while I waited for the banks to reappear, for the moment giving up the ford, I amused myself by writing the following two verses, on the feet of which, if not on my own, I crossed the foaming torrent.

'Praecipiti modo quod decurrit tramite flumen,
Tempore consumptum iam cito deficiet.'

You see that, inverting the order, you get the following :

'Deficiet cito iam consumptum tempore flumen,
Tramite decurrit quod modo praecipiti.'

Of course the merit all lies in the arrangement of the words; elegance you must not expect, for there is none. The example sufficiently explains, I think, what you
7 wanted to know. It now falls to you to oblige me in a similar way by following my lead, and sending me something which I in my turn request. An ideal chance is yours in the near future of speaking in public on the most notable of subjects, the glory of that Julius Caesar in praise of whom you have already written. The theme is so great that even the most exuberant of orators might doubt his power of rising to the occasion. Even if we leave out of the account all that the historian of Padua[1] has written on the fame of the invincible dictator, who could hope to challenge with the living word the work of Suetonius, or Juventius Martialis,[2] or the *Ephemerides* of Balbus? Be the enterprise re-
8 served for your hand. My friendly care it shall rather be to see that the benches are well filled with auditors, and to prepare men's ears for the coming bursts of applause.[3] While you exalt the virtues of another, it shall be my part to celebrate yours. Have no fear that I shall bring an audience of ignorant or spiteful Catos, ready to cloak either defect under a pretence of critical severity. One can make allowance for honest lack of culture, but people sly enough to detect good work, and at the same time grudge it credit, are detected and discredited themselves by every man of honour.

9 Do not, then, be apprehensive on this account; every one will lend a favouring ear and a fostering support; we shall all enjoy together the refreshing pleasure which your recitation will give us. Some will extol your fluency, more your talent, all of us your freedom from conceit.

For it is laudable indeed, when a young man, I might almost say a boy, can stand forth in the open arena and be adjudged the prize on the double ground of character and talent. Farewell.

XV

To his friend Gelasius

c. A.D. 481

You prove my offence against you, and I do not 1
defend myself on the charge. In so far as no letter in this collection bears your name, I have indeed offended. But you write that you will regard the fault as venial, provided I send you something for recital at table, like the letter in prose and verse which I sent not long ago to my friend Tonantius for a similar purpose. You conclude by deploring that when I drop into poetry I never write anything but hendecasyllables, preferring that in the present case I should substitute for this trochaic facility something composed in verses of six feet. I acquiesce, only hoping that the enclosed will please you, whether you style it ode or eclogue. The composition was hard work, for when one is out of practice in a given metre, to write in it is far from easy.

'You wish, dear friend, the fierce iambic to echo through my pages with impetuous rhythm, as hitherto the trochee; the spondee with its two slow feet and its time of four, to hold the flighty dactyl in check awhile; you wish that other swiftest of all feet to resound with these, named fitly from the Pyrrhic dance, and always to be placed at the conclusion; you wish next the anapaest to bound the beginning or the end of the verse,

which only in strictness deserves its name when a third long syllable follows upon two short.

An ordinary poet—for such, you know, your Sollius is—has not the skill to manage all these measures. My note is uncertain, my wandering tongue has no art to unroll from echoing mouth the long-drawn epic. That skill is rather Leo's, or his who in Latin song follows in Leo's steps, and in the Greek stands first, who descends from the Sire of the Consentii; who with lyre and tone and measure has sung, men say, by the ford of Pegasus in every form we know, and in the Greek tongue has held the high stars by Pindar's side, and ranged victorious the twin-peaked hill, second to none among the caves of Delphi. But if either bard forsake the Doric speech, and sing to the poet's lyre a Latian strain, then, Flaccus, all too feebly shalt thou wield the plectrum of Venusia, and thou, O vanquished swan of Aufidus, shalt bow thy white and tuneful neck, moaning to hear the music of the swans of Atax.

Nor these alone are skilled, albeit than the common skilled more skilful. For the rhetor Severianus had sung with a more transcending voice, and Domnulus, the subtle bard of Africa, with more elegance, and the learned Petrus with more harmonious strength, whose love of writing letters would never have stayed him from composing marvellous verse. And ever more masterly had been the melodious music of Proculus, him of Ligurian home and race, so finishing his graceful poems as to make his country rival in men's love Mantua of the Venetian land, and himself arise the peer of Homer in his glory, or drive abreast with Maro's car.

But I, whose thought and style merit contempt, how should I raise my babbling voice among these, even for your pleasure, without proof of babbling unashamed and achievement falling ever short of my ambition? Yet if even this shame suffice not to deter me, how shall I deny you? Love knows not fear: 'tis therefore I obey.'

Do not, now, be critical with one who picks up a lost 2
thread; all I ask is some indulgence for an art I rarely practise. If in future you make more such demands, you will have to smooth the path of my obedience, by giving me either a subject for my Muse, or a dance to put me in the comic vein. Farewell.

XVI

To his friend Firminus

c. A.D. 484

You may remember, honoured Son, asking me to add 1
a ninth book, specially composed for you, to the eight already issued: those addressed to Constantius, whose great qualities are known to you, his eminent capacity, his sanity in counsel, his pre-eminent gift of eloquence, by which, in the discussion of public affairs, he eclipses all other speakers on his own or on the opposite side. Herewith I fulfil my promise with punctuality, if not strictly as proposed. For on my return after my 2
diocesan visitation,[1] I began going through all my mouldering old papers for any chance drafts of letters that might be among them; I worked as fast and as hard as I could, and then had them out and transcribed them with

all speed. I did not allow the wintry season to interfere with my resolve of fulfilling your desire, though the copyist was hindered by the cold which prevented the ink drying on the page; the drops froze harder than the pen,[1] and as the hand pressed the point on the page, they seemed to break from it rather than to flow. I have done my best to acquit my obligation before the mild Favonian breeze brings his natal showers to fertilize our twelfth month, which you call the month of Numa.

3 I must now ask you not to require of me the two incompatible virtues of perfection and rapidity; for when a book is written, as it were, to order, the author may perhaps expect credit for punctual delivery but hardly for the quality of his work.

As you profess delight with the iambics I recently sent to our very genial friend Gelasius, you too shall have your present in the shape of these little slaves of Mytilene.[2]

* 'Now has my bark steered its bold course on the twin seas of prose and verse, nor have I feared to ply the tiller on their sundered tides. I have lowered the yards, furled the great sails, and laid down the oar; my thwarts have run alongside, I have leapt ashore to kiss the dear-loved sands.

The jealous chorus of my foes makes muttering; they snarl like furious dogs; but openly they dare say nothing; they fear the public approval which is mine. Hissings of evil tongues beat upon the poop, and shake the keel, and toss the curved sides of my boat; they fly about the mast.

* Translated into German verse by Fertig, Part iii, pp. 23–4.

For I, having recked nought of the heaving storms, with the steersman's guardian art have held my prow straight and come safe to port, winner of a twofold crown. One the Roman people granted, and the purple-robed senate assigned, and with a single voice the company of the lettered, what time Nerva Trajan's forum saw arise a lasting statue to my honour, set up between the founders of the two Libraries.[1] The other was mine wellnigh two lustres after, when I received the honour of that high office which now alone maintains the rights of people and of senate.[2]

Heroic verse I have written, and much have I woven in lighter vein; elegiacs in six feet I have turned with twin caesura.

Now, trained to ride my course in lines of eleven syllables I have gloried in a swift way; singing many a time in Sapphic metre, rarely in the impetuous iambic.

Nor can I now call to mind all that once I wrote in the ardour of past youth; would that the mass of it might be buried away and withdrawn into silence!

For as we come to our last years, and the goal of old age draws nearer, the deeper grows our shame, remembering the levities of our callow youth.

In the dread of that remembrance, I transferred all my care to the epistolary style, that though guilty of foolishness in song I might be innocent in deed; nor be esteemed one all dissolved in pretty phrases, filling my page with tropes and idle trappings, by which the poet's empty fame might stain the austerity of the priest.

Henceforth I plunge no more into any kind of verse; be the measure light or grave, I shall not readily be drawn to produce a song again;

Unless it be to sing the trials of men persecuted for the faith, and martyrs worthy of heaven, who have bought by death the reward of eternal life.

First my chant should celebrate the prelate who held the throne of Toulouse,[1] whom they flung headlong down from the highest steps of the Capitol.

Who denied Jove and Minerva, and confessed the blessing of Christ's cross, and therefore was bound by a raging mob to the wild bull's back.

That when the beast was driven to full speed over the height, his rent body was flung to earth, and the rock reddened with the pulp of his reeking brain.

And after Saturninus my lyre should sing all those other guardian saints who through many tribulations have proved my helpers at need.

Their several names my pious song may not rehearse; but though they sound not from the strings, they shall ever find echo in my heart.'

4 Let me at the end drop verse for prose, and so conform to the scheme originally proposed for my book. If I closed an unmetrical work with rhyme, I should break the rule of Horace,[2] and turn out as common pot what began as amphora. Farewell.

NOTES

*The large reference figures are to the page numbers, the smaller to the numbers inserted in the text.**

VOLUME I

1. 1. Both Petrarch (Letters: preface) and Politian (Letters, I. i.) imagined that in this passage Sidonius was depreciating Cicero; but modern commentators take the more natural view that the greatest of Roman letter-writers is placed among authors of supreme excellence, and regarded as beyond imitation. Cf. Sirmond, Notes, p. 7; Germain, i, p. 81; Baret, pp. 76, 105.

The Symmachus mentioned in the text is Q. Aurelius Symmachus, who flourished at the close of the fourth century and has left ten books of Letters. An orator as well as a writer and a prominent Senator, and one of the last distinguished defenders of paganism, he is remembered for his effort to secure the restoration of the altar of Victory to the Senate House.

Julius Titianus, an orator, lived in the time of Maximin I, who chose him as tutor in rhetoric for his son; during the latter part of his life he presided over the Schools of Lyons and Besançon. He was the author of geographical agricultural works, and of a book of fables. The 'Letters of Famous Women' were placed in the mouths of heroines, after the manner of the Heroides of Ovid. Cf. *Histoire littéraire de la France*, i, pp. 401–4.

2. M. Cornelius Fronto, orator, the distinguished master of Marcus Aurelius, who bestowed the consulship on him in 161.

* The abbreviation C. M. H. stands for the *Cambridge Mediaeval History*: see p. clviii.

2. 1. The poems of Sidonius were probably published in 468, several years before this first book of the Letters. This date is probable because the Panegyric of Anthemius begins the book, out of its chronological order, a fact which points to publication during the reign of that emperor.

3. 1. A corrupt passage. The text reads: *Cervix non* [sedet nodis] *sed nervis.*

2. Reading: *genis ut adhuc vesticipibus.* Another reading is: *genas ad usque forcipibus*, which would recall the use of the tweezers so frequently found in Teutonic cemeteries.

3. This allusion to Theodoric's Arian clergy, and his mechanical outward conformity, is probably intended to reconcile the orthodox Gallo-Romans to a possible extension of the Visigothic king's influence. See Introduction, p. xvi.

4. 1. The doorway of the hall was screened by curtains outside which was a barrier; the guards were posted between the two. Sirmond quotes Corippus (III. ch. vi) on the audience hall of Justin, where a similar arrangement prevailed. Cf. also Cassiodorus (*Variae*, XI. vii).

2. Sidonius uses the word *toreuma* here, as in II. xiii and IX. xiii, for *toral* or *torale*, the covering of a couch. In this he follows Prudentius and Salvian (Sirmond, Notes, p. 9).

5. 1. *Tabula.* The use of this word implies that the game was played with a board, while the mention of *calculi* a few lines below shows that 'men' were probably used in addition to the dice. Various suggestions as to the game here intended have been made; the game of *Duodecim scripta*, in which both 'men' and dice were used, seems probable. Cf. Marquardt, *Privatleben*, p. 857.

2. The words are: *Sine motu evaditur, sine colludio evadit.* The verb may refer merely to the breaking up of the party; but the allusion may be, as Hodgkin thought, to the process of getting the men out of one's opponent's 'table'.

6. 1. *Organa hydraulica.* Cf. Vitruvius, ix. 9 and x. 1, 13. Hydraulic organs are said to have been invented by Ctesibius of Alexandria in the time of Ptolemy Euergetes (247–222 B.C.). Hero of Alexandria (*Pneumatica*, ch. lxvi) describes

one ; another description is given by Vitruvius. Athenaeus, Tertullian, and Claudian all allude to such organs, which were evidently very popular in the Roman empire from the third century. An example is represented in a terra-cotta found at Carthage (Daremberg and Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, iii, p. 312, and fig. 3919).

7. 1. The Calpurnian law permanently excluded from the Senate, and punished by a fine, those convicted of political intrigue. The Julian law excluded for five years only. The emperors, when they nominated to magistracies, attached penalties to this offence. Sidonius speaks retrospectively, without particular regard for the circumstances of his own day.

2. For the Palatine Service see Cassiodorus (*Variae*, vi. 6 ff.). It is sometimes described as *militia Palatina*, the former word bearing no necessary relation to military service. Cf. VI. i below.

3. Gaudentius, as tribune of the praetorium, had occupied a lower rank than the Vicarii, who represented the prefect in the several dioceses. Filimatius is urged to accept membership of the Prefect's Council, because it conferred important privileges, and a status above those who had only served Vicarii in the same manner. For the advisory bodies of high officials in the provinces, see Reid in C. M. H. i, p. 48.

4. The text is : *Scamnis tamen amicalibus deputabuntur*. The general sense appears to be that Gaudentius was of a generous nature and caused the officials of his court to assign good places to his detractors. For the position of the Vicarius, cf. Reid in C. M. H. i, p. 32.

8. 1. There is here a lacuna in the text, after which there appears to be a change of subject.

9. 1. A private person could only avail himself of the *cursus publicus* or imperial post service, by land or water, if he had received an imperial summons and was furnished with an imperial letter. (Cf. Theodoret, ii, 11 ; Symmachus, *Ep.* ii, 63.) Cassiodorus mentions the state galleys maintained on the Po in Theodoric's time (*Variae*, II. xxxi). Cf. also Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, i, pp. 558 ff.

10. 1. For the story of Phaethon's sisters, who, upon his death, mourned so bitterly that they were changed into poplars, and their tears into amber-coloured gum, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ii.

2. Many of the epithets applied by Sidonius to these rivers are those used by Virgil and Claudian.

3. Virgil, Eclogue ix, 28 :

Mantua vae miserae nimium vicina Cremonae.

4. For the frogs, and the scarcity of drinking-water in Ravenna, cf. Martial, *Epigrams*, iii, 51, 56. Ravenna proper, Classis its port, and the suburb which grew up along the road connecting the two, really formed a single city.

11. 1. Ariminum was the first city to pass under Caesar's power when he had crossed the Rubicon, after his 'rebellion' against the Senate. Fanum received its name from the temple to Fortune erected there in memory of the victory of 207 B.C., when Hasdrubal was slain on the Metaurus.

2. Cf. Horace, *Sat.* i. 5. The Atabulus, or Sirocco, derived its name from the Greek words ἄτη and βάλλω ; as we might say, 'death-dealing.'

12. 1. These epithets are again employed by earlier authors. Cf. note 10. 2 above.

2. *Apostolorum liminibus affusus.* The basilica of St. Peter was not included in the *pomoerium* until the time of Leo IV, the builder of the 'Leonine City'; that of St. Paul has always been without the walls. To reach either, Sidonius would have to make a détour, as the Flaminian Way entered Rome at the north, where the Piazza del Popolo now stands at the top of the Corso.

3. For Ricimer, see pp. xix ff. The marriage with Anthemius' daughter, Alypia, was a purely political union; see Introduction, pp. xxv, xxxiii.

4. Shouts of 'Thalassio' were raised at Roman weddings when the bride was conducted to the bridegroom's house. The traditional explanation is that the word signifies the name of a Roman senator of the time of Romulus. During the rape of the Sabine women, a maid of exceptional beauty was carried off for him, the bearer shouting 'for Thalassius' in order to protect himself from interference.

(Cf. Marquardt, *Privatleben*, p. 54.) Fescennine verses, of an outspoken character, were sung at marriage feasts. The present passage seems to show that the Christian wedding still admitted many pagan features in the year 467, though Sidonius may be writing 'classically' with an eye rather to literary effect than to reality. The early Christians disapproved of the usage of the garland at weddings (cf. Tertullian, *De Corona*, xiii); but the custom was afterwards restored. For the *corona* in Christian times, see J. Schrijnen, *La Couronne nuptiale dans l'antiquité chrétienne*, in *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, xxxi, p. 309.

13. 1. *Militiae Palatinae.* Cf. note 7. 2 above.

14. 1. *In qua unica totius orbis civitate soli barbari et servi peregrinantur.* The allusion is to the extension of Roman citizenship by Caracalla to the whole empire, after which all but aliens and slaves were 'at home' within the walls. With the preceding eulogy of the city, cf. Cassiodorus, *Var.* i. 49; II. i; x. 7.

15. 1. *Conatuum tuorum socius adjutor praevius particeps ero.* Cf. Pliny, *Ep.* vi. 9.

2. *Casus Arvandi.* See Introduction, p. xxx.

16. 1. *Comite sacrarum largitionum.* The functions of the 'Count of the Sacred (Imperial) Largesses' expanded with the lapse of time, and included multifarious duties. But he was essentially the great imperial Minister of Finance. Cf. Cassiodorus, *Var.* vi. 7, &c.; Symmachus, *Ep.* x. 33. See also Mommsen, *Libri Theodosiani XVI*, vol. i, p. 45; Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, i, pp. 216, 217, and *Letters of Cassiodorus*, p. 88; Reid in C.M.H. i, pp. 43, 47.

2. The *gesta decretalia* embodied the provincial decree and formed the credentials of the envoys, without which they could not be heard. (Codex Theod. *De legatis.*) Cf. *Pagina decretalis*, in VII. ix. 6.

3. For Tonantius Ferreolus, Petronius, and Thaumastus, see List of Correspondents. L. Afranius Syagrius was consul in the reign of Gratian.

18. 1. The manuscripts have the word *decemviris.* An accused senator was usually judged by the Prefect of the City,

assisted by a committee of five senators chosen by lot. If *decemviris* is not a mistake for *quinqueviris*, we must suppose that the usage admitted of exceptions. Cf. Cod. Theod. xiii : *De accusationibus*, and Cassiodorus, *Var.* iv. 22, 23.

19. 1. *Respondere legati, quanquam valde nequiter, constaret, quod ipse dictasset.* A difficult passage. Mohr (*Praefatio*, p. xiii) takes *constaret* as = *iterum affirmaret*, i.e. 'let him repeat the admission that he himself dictated the letter'.

20. 1. The island in the Tiber where a temple of Aesculapius stood. The great temple of Aesculapius was at Epidaurus, and the serpent was his attribute as Healer.

2. The law of Tiberius only granted ten days' reprieve; Theodosius extended the term to thirty.

21. 1. The Rhône mists are still proverbial in the Lyons of modern times.

2. The clergy were forbidden to trade or to lend money at unfair usury. 'Readers', however, traded (cf. VI. viii), and clergy occasionally had money out at interest, a practice which Sidonius himself seems to sanction, provided the rate was fair (cf. IV. xxiv). The Syrians, described by Jerome as *avarissimi mortalium*, were the ubiquitous traders of the early Christian centuries in the West.

23. 1. Sidonius had come to Rome as a member of a mission from Auvergne. Cf. Introduction, p. xxvii.

24. 1. The *opusculum* is the Panegyric of Anthemius, which is counted as *Carmen* ii in the poems of Sidonius.

25. 1. Thraso is the bombastic soldier in the *Eunuchus* of Terence; Pyrgopolinices, the *Miles gloriosus* of Plautus.

2. For the functions of the *Praefectus annonae* in these late centuries, cf. Cassiodorus, *Var.* IV. lxviii; Symmachus, *Ep.* X. xlviii. As in Tacitus' day, the theatre was always the principal scene of discontent if the corn supplies ran short. The Vandal command of the Mediterranean was the reason for Sidonius' anxiety.

26. 1. The quotation is from Horace, *Sat.* II. i. 82 ff., and the allusion to the law of the Twelve Tables against libel.

27. 1. The events here described occurred during Majorian's

visit to Arles in 461, after his pacification of Auvergne. See Introduction, p. xxiii, and cf. Chaix, i, pp. 132 ff.

2. The especial reference is to the setting up of Nero's verses in gold letters on the Capitol, as related by Suetonius.

28. 1. *Qui genus? unde domo?* Virgil, *Aeneid*, viii. 114.

2. Chremes was the avaricious father of comedy.

3. *Coniuratio Marcelliana.* The word in its existing form can hardly be correct (Mohr, *Praefatio*, p. xv) if Marcellinus was the hero of the rebellion. See Introduction, p. xx.

29. 1. *Pharsalia*, v. 322.

30. 1. The couch was the *stibadium*, often called *sigma*, from its resemblance to the C-shaped form of that Greek letter: we might call it a 'horse-shoe' couch. The places of honour were at the end of the right and left 'horns'; in the present case the emperor was at the right, the consul at the left extremity.

31. 1. Sidonius had probably been given the rank of count by Majorian. Constantine used this older title as an honorific designation for various officers, and four of the highest members of the imperial service bore it. In course of time it was divorced from the Court, and those whom it designated were divided into grades, the honour in some cases (as perhaps in that of Sidonius) being purely honorary. (Reid, in C. M. H. i, pp. 46, 47.)

34. 1. The name *Seronatus* is the opposite of *Citonatus*, 'quick born', and intended to signify an easy delivery. Sidonius gives it a meaning of his own, and then cites it as an example of antiphrasis (as Euxine for an inhospitable sea, Parcae for the implacable Fates, &c.).

35. 1. *Nec dat pretia contemnens, nec accipit instrumenta desperans.* Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Franc.* IV. xii) quotes this phrase, applying it to the avaricious bishop Cautinus. The sense in that place seems to preclude the idea that the bishop neglected to furnish himself with deeds, because in the sequel he insists upon having them. The point here seems to be that Seronatus mistrusted deeds, as possible sources of evidence against him. Cf. Chaix, i, p. 377.

2. *Leges Theudosianas calcans Theudoricianasque proponens.* Paronomasia is used to give effect to the charge that

Seronatus was barbarophile for treasonable purposes of his own. His contemporary, Euric, the successor of Theodoric II, issued a new code about 476, improving upon those of his predecessors, Theodoric I and II. All incorporated much from the Roman (Theodosian) Code, for which see Mommsen, as under note 16. 1. Seronatus, who, though nominally a Roman official, was openly acting in the Gothic interest, is depicted as giving barbaric law an unfair preference. See Introduction.

3. i.e. by the tonsure: they would enter the Church.

36. 1. *Samia mihi mater fuit.* Terence, *Eunuchus*, I. ii. 27 (107).

2. *Avitaci sumus.* The villa of Avitacum, named from Avitus, is the estate which Sidonius received with his wife Papianilla. Fauchet considered that it was situated by the lake of Sorlieu, then called Abitac, and now, perhaps, Obier (*Antiquités françaises*, i, p. 53). But the position is uncertain; another opinion favours the lake of Aydat, in Puy-de-Dôme. In any case, Avitacum was not far from Clermont. The description is modelled on Pliny's pictures of his country-houses (*Ep.* II. xvii; V. vi). Cf. Chaix, i, pp. 148 ff.

37. 1. *Balneum.* For the arrangement of the Roman bath, see Daremberg and Saglio, *Dict. des antiquités grecques et romaines*, s. v. *Balnea*, and Marquardt, *Privatleben*, pp. 279 ff. Cf. also the two letters of Pliny mentioned in the preceding note. The principal rooms were the *tepidarium*, or hot-air chamber; *caldarium*, or warm bath, *frigidarium*, or cold bath. The *destrictarium* or *unctorium*, near the *tepidarium*, was for rubbing-down and anointing; the *apodyterium* for undressing. The *piscina*, *cisterna*, or *baptisterium*, was in the *frigidarium*. The *exedra* was a conversation-room. The verses on the walls of Sidonius' baths, 'which people might read once and would not wish to read again,' are probably those preserved to us in *Carm.* xviii and xix.

38. 1. Philistio was a mimeograph of the Augustan age.

41. 1. Cf. II. ix; III. iii; IV. iv; V. xvii.

42. 1. *Agonem Drepitanum Troianae superstitionis.* The Arvernians claimed a Trojan descent (cf. VII. vii and p. 243,

note 110. 2). The allusion is to the games instituted at Drepanum by Aeneas in honour of Anchises (Virgil, *Aen.* v).

43. 1. The title was probably that of Patrician. Magnus Felix was never consul.

2. *Tua felicitate.* Such punning plays upon personal names have a peculiar attraction for Sidonius. Cf. II. xiii, *Tuus Maximus maximo . . . documento*; IV. xxii, (*Gaudentius*) *gaudeat*; IX. ix, play on the name Faustus, &c. Cf. Introduction, p. cxxix.

3. The reference is to the rash action of Lucius Papirius Cursor in giving battle in the absence of Fabius from the army. Cf. Livy, viii. 29–35. Sidonius says the same thing to Claudianus Mamertus. See IV. iii.

48. 1. *Infortunatam fecunditatem.* An echo of the phrase of Tacitus: *Infelici fecunditate fortunae totiens obnoxia* (*Ann.* ii. 75).

49. 1. *Injuste tibi justa persoluta.* Cf. III. iv, xii; VII. xvii; and Ovid, *Met.* ii. 627.

2. The situation of the villa of Prusianum is thought to coincide with Bresis on the Gardon, lying on the main road between Nîmes and Clermont. Cf. below, note 51. 3.

3. Aracynthus, a mountain in Aetolia or Acarnania; it is uncertain what Mt. Nysa is here intended.

50. 1. *Sphaeristarum contrastantium paria.* Cf. note 41. 1.

2. This passage is interesting as a description of the library in a Roman villa, but is tantalizing by its incompleteness, like the allusions of Cicero to the rooms where he kept his books (*Ep.* IV. v; VI. viii).

We gather that there were high cases (*armaria*) round the walls as in the small library discovered at Herculaneum, with shelves on which rolls were laid horizontally, with the *umbilicus* outwards; the *armaria* must also have had higher shelves for the books or *codices*, which were now in common use. Boethius in his *Consolation of Philosophy* indicates that in his time *armaria* were glazed and ornamented with ivory; in addition to the book cases there are desks (*plutei*), on which books in use were laid. For the library of Consentius in the villa Octaviana near Narbonne, cf. VIII. iv. See also Justus

Lipsius, *De Bibliothecis,* Synt. ix; Marquardt, *Privatleben,* p. 115. The *Athenaeum,* at Rome, where authors read or recited their compositions, was founded by Hadrian; but the provincial capital had also its Athenaeum, as, for instance, Lyons (IV. viii; IX. ix). In earlier times authors gave their readings in the houses of wealthy men, who kindly lent a large apartment for the purpose; the custom, which was a necessary part of 'publication', is frequently mentioned by Pliny and other authors.

51. 1. Turranius Rufinus, born in the mid-fourth century and baptized about 372. He remained in the East for twenty-six years, and shared the admiration which Jerome at one time felt for Origen. On his return to Italy, he translated into Latin Pamphilus' Apology for Origen, and the latter's books Περὶ ἀρχῶν. He died in Sicily, *c.* 410. Adamantius was a person in the Dialogue Περὶ τῆς εἰς Θεὸν ὀρθῆς πίστεως, held by Rufinus to be a work of Origen, but no longer so regarded. Cf. the edition by Van de Sande Bakhuyzen in the series: *Die christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte,* Leipzig, 1901.

2. *Clepsydrae.* The water-clocks mentioned by Sidonius appear to belong to the class strictly described as 'hydraulic horologia'. In the simpler forms of these instruments, the water rose from one level to another, and from mark to mark on the sides of the receptacle into which it poured. In more elaborate types lines were engraved on a cylinder or column, to which an indicator, actuated by rising water, pointed. Clepsydrae of this kind only became common in the early Christian centuries. See Daremberg and Saglio, *Dict. des antiquités grecques et romaines,* iii, p. 261 f. Cf. also Marquardt, *Privatleben,* p. 256.

3. *Vorocingum . . . Prusianum.* The first is the villa of Apollinaris, cousin of Sidonius, the second that of Ferreolus The Abbé Tessier has placed the latter near Bresis at the foot of the hill of St. Germain on the right bank of the Gardon, and in the territory of Alais; the first he sets on the other side of the river at Beringueri, under the hill of Couillère. See also *Hist. litt. de la France,* iv, p. 46; Grégoire and Collombet, i, pp. 220 ff.

52. 1. This passage is curious as seeming to show that the country-houses of magnates like Tonantius Ferreolus and Apollinaris contained no spare accommodation, even for a siesta.

2. The extemporized vapour-bath here described recalls the customs of eastern Europe, Asia, and primitive America. Gregory of Tours relates the death of the daughter of the great Theodoric in a vapour-bath. (*Hist. Franc.* iii, p. 31.) The Cilician hangings were made of goats' hair. Cf. IV. xxiv, and Marquardt, *Privatleben*, p. 135.

54. 1. This description of the church of Patiens at Lyons presents several features of interest. It was built close to the junction of the Rhône and Saône, near the road from Lyons to Narbonne, and replaced the earlier church of the Maccabees (the first martyrs of Lyons were so called), built by Zachariah, successor of Irenaeus. After it received the relics of St. Justus, it was called by his name, and under this appellation was probably known to Sidonius (V. xvii); it was destroyed by the Huguenots in 1562 (Fertig, ii, p. 37). Its dedication was celebrated by a festival which lasted a whole week, and was signalized by an address from Faustus, Bishop of Riez (IX. ii), at which Sidonius was present. The church seems to have been a basilica, orientated, and with an atrium of the usual type. (Cf. H. Holtzinger, *Die altchristliche Architektur in systematischer Darstellung*, 1889, pp. 53, 70, 179; Chaix, i, p. 322.) Most commentators take lines 16–21 of the poem as referring to the wealth of columns in the interior of the building; but it would seem that Sir Thomas Jackson is right in making the words apply to the atrium. (*Byzantine and Romanesque Architecture*, ii, p. 31.) They run:

Huic est porticus applicata triplex
fulmentis Aquitanicis superba,
ad cujus specimen remotiora
claudunt atria porticus secundae,
et campum medium procul locatas
vestit saxea silva per columnas.

Mosaics covered the floor, as well as the walls, soffits of the

windows (?) and half-dome of the apse (*camera*, on which cf. Holtzinger, as above, p. 72). For mosaics in other churches in Gaul, cf. the church built by Namatius in the same century, where the walls were ornamented with marble and mosaic, and that erected by Bishop Agricola at Châlon (Gregory of Tours, *Hist. Franc.* V. xlvi).

55. 1. This is a very difficult passage. It seems to refer throughout to glass wall-mosaics, and not, as is generally supposed, to windows, in the form of pierced *transennae* with small inset panes. Cf. Sir T. G. Jackson, as above, ii, p. 31; Holtzinger, as above.

58. 1. *Chironica magis institutum arte quam Machaonica.* The joke depends on the double use of the word 'Chiron', as the name of a physician, and as the comparative of *κακός* (*χείρων* = worse). Cf. Sirmond, Notes, p. 35.

59. 1. For Sidonius' delight in this kind of pun, see Introduction, p. cxxix; note 43. 2, &c.

2. The clock is the *clepsydra*, on which see above, note 51. 2.

61. 1. *Raptis incubans opibus.* Cf. VIII. vii. A reminiscence of Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 507.

62. 1. *In pago Vialoscensi.* Savaron and Sirmond consider this place to have been south-west of Riom, near Volvic.

2. *Tunicata quiete.* In the country the Romans dispensed with the toga. Cf. Juvenal, iii. 179; Martial, *Epigr.* x. 51.

64. 1. The name 'Septimania' first occurs in this passage. It means the coast line from the Pyrenees to the Rhône. Cf. Mommsen, *Index Locorum*, s. v., and Bury, Appendix to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, iii, p. 532.

65. 1. Reminiscent of Pliny, *Ep.* vii. 25.

66. 1. *Angustias mansionum.* *Mansiones* were rest-houses for the night, on the high roads, in some degree corresponding to the 'public bungalows' of India and the East. Cf. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, p. 561.

67. 1. For the influence of the Celtic dialect even among the educated in Gaul, cf. Introduction, pp. cxxxiii-cxxxiv.

2. Gregory of Tours, who also mentions this feat of

Ecdicius, puts the number of his men at ten. (*Hist. Franc.* ii. 24.)

70. 1. Ecdicius was probably at the court of one of the Burgundian kings; not always a safe place of residence. Cf. V. vii.

2. *Propugnantum*, i.e. the Burgundians, who, partly from jealousy of the Visigoths, partly owing to the diplomacy of Ecdicius, assisted the provincials at the time of Euric's final advance. Cf. Introduction, pp. xxxix, xl.

71. 1. *Eborolacensis*. Ébreuil, now a small town on the Sioule, an affluent of the Allier, and close to Gannat. (Chaix, i, p. 27.)

72. 1. *Tractatus*, i.e., the letter, I. vi above.

73. 1. *Annum bonum*, &c. Cf. VI. xii. 9.

2. *Sabini*, *Sabiniani*. The exact point is obscure.

74. 1. *Quaestor Licinianus*. See Introduction, p. xli. His office was *Quaestor Sacri Palati*, which, after the time of Constantine, was the highest legal dignity in the empire. (Reid, in C. M. H. i, p. 37.)

78. 1. *Avi*. The prefect Apollinaris, on whom see p. clxi.

2. *Tam bustualibus favillis quam cadaveribus*. This passage, with others in the Letters, seems to imply that cremation was still practised in Gaul in Sidonius' time. See Introduction, p. cxiv. The cemetery here mentioned was just outside the church of St. Just at Lyons (see note 54. 1 above), which itself lay on the edge of the town.

79. 1. The words are: *torsi latrones*. Ampère (*Hist. litt. de la France méridionale*, ii, p. 233) considered that Sidonius had the men subjected to torture at the grave-side; in this he is followed by Germain. But the simpler meaning seems preferable, though the law certainly prescribed torture (Mommsen, *Theodosiani Libri XVI*, vol. I, pt. ii, pp. 463 ff.; II, p. 114).

2. The reference is probably to Patiens, Bishop of Lyons, for whom see p. clxxv.

Chaix suggests that as the grave-diggers were under the control of Church authorities, Sidonius felt bound, on second thoughts, to inform the bishop. (i. 173.)

82. 1. Gnatho is the parasite of the *Eunuchus*, whom Terence has made a classical example of the species. The present Letter is one of those on which Sidonius evidently expended great pains; but the realism of his description will probably seem to most readers excessive. Cf. Chaix, i, p. 337.

83. 1. *Vesicarum ruptor fractorque ferularum.* The close association of these two epithets seems to justify Savaron's view that *vesica* should be taken literally, and not metaphorically, in the sense of 'bombast'. His reference to Seneca, *Nat. Quaest.* ii. 27, is to the point. *Aliud genus est acre, quod crepitum magis dixerim quam sonum, qualem audire solemus, cum super caput alicuius dirupta vesica est.*

2. *Pollinctor.* The pollinctores were assistants of the *libitinarii*, whose duty it was to anoint and perfume the bodies of the dead: they also took casts of the faces of the dead, for the *imagines* preserved by survivors. The words *cadavere rogali*, immediately preceding, suggest, though they cannot alone be taken to prove, the persistence of cremation in the fifth century. Cf. note 78. 2 above. For Roman funeral usage, see Marquardt, *Privatleben*, 352, 384; and Daremberg and Saglio, *Dict. des antiq. grecques et romaines*, i, pp. 386 ff.

84. 1. *Morbo Syllano*, i. e. phthiriasis.

2. *Ampsancti.* Ampsanctus, now Le Mofete, was a valley in the territory of the Hirpini between Campania and Apulia and in the middle of the peninsula. It is described by Virgil (*Aen.* vii. 563–71), who alludes to the pestiferous fumes of its cave.

85. 1. Grenoble: *Gratianopolis.*

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3. 1. *Soror* is here used for 'cousin'. (Cf. VII. iii–v.) Probus had married Eulalia, cousin of Sidonius. (*Carm.* ix. 329–34; xxiv. 95–98.)

4. 1. *Eusebianos lares.* Eusebius was professor of philosophy at Lyons.

5. 1. *Claudianus.* See p. clxxiii. This Letter is the only one in the collection which is not written by Sidonius him-

self. It is inserted in order to make our author's reply in the next letter more intelligible; though Sidonius probably had in mind Pliny's inclusion of a letter of Tacitus among his own.

2. The work by Claudianus Mamertus, *De statu animae*, controverting the opinions of Faustus as to the materiality of the soul. Cf. Introduction, p. lxxxi.

8. 1. Most of the names in this list are too familiar to require comment. Euphrates was a Stoic philosopher, a friend of the younger Pliny and Hadrian. Perdix, whose name is variously given, is the mythical nephew of Daedalus. The Eucherius mentioned a little lower down is St. Eucher.

9. 1. According to Gennadius, the hymn referred to is that which begins : *Pange linguâ gloriosi*, &c. Cf. Sirmond, Notes, p. 43.

10. 1. This is one of the passages attesting the half-compulsory nature of Sidonius' election as bishop.

2. After his entry into the Church, Sidonius was in great request as a writer of elegies and Church inscriptions. Nor did he altogether renounce the composition of secular verse. (Cf. IX. xiii. to Tonantius.)

3. *Pauci quos aequus amavit.* Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 129.

11. 1. Below, and in the sixth Letter of this book, Faustinus is described as *antistes*, which should mean 'bishop' (but cf. note 23. 2). The word 'frater', as applied to him, is not to be taken literally. Sidonius uses it of various persons with whom he was on a footing of intimacy, or of those whom he regarded as his sons in Christ.

12. 1. *Gozolas*, a Jew. Cf. III. iv. Under the Franks, Jews were expelled or baptized by force. (Gregory, *Hist. Franc.* V. xi, VI. xvii; cf. Gregory the Great, *Ep.* i. 45.) It is interesting to note that Chilperic had a Jewish furnisher of objects of art and luxury, who resisted conversion by Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Franc.* VI. v). For the relations of the Ostrogoths with Jews, cf. Cassiodorus, *Variae*, IV. xliii, V. xxxvii. The present Letter perhaps alludes to the mission of the quaestor Licinianus, sent from Rome to treat with the Goths on the subject of Auvergne. Cf. III. vii.

13. 1. This Letter probably refers to a pilgrimage to the

shrine of the Arvernian martyr St. Julian at Brioude (Brivas). Cf. Chaix, ii, p. 117.

14. 1. *Currentem mones*. Cf. Pliny, *Ep.* I. viii, III. vii; and Symmachus, *Ep.* I. lvi; IX. xxxvi.

15. 1. *Apicios epulones et Byzantinos chironomontas*. There were three Apicii, all notorious as gourmets, and living respectively in the times of Sulla, Augustus, and Trajan. 'Byzantine' here is probably used to express the extreme of luxury. On the esquire-carvers of wealthy nobles, and their regulated gestures, cf. Petronius, *Sat.* xxxvi; Seneca, *Ep.* xlvii; Juvenal, *Sat.* v. 120 ff.: *Chironomonta volanti cultello*, &c. The word *chironomôn* is also used of a dancer by Juvenal, *Sat.* vi. 63.

16. 1. *Ragnahild*. Queen of Euric, whose name we learn from Sidonius alone.

17. 1. 'Such a school': literally, *Athenaeum*, on which cf. p. 223, note 50. 2, above.

18. 1. *Monachum complet, non sub palliolo sed sub paludamento*. Monks, like philosophers, wore the *pallium*, a Greek mantle. (Cassian, *De habitu monachi*, I. vii.) An extra cowl or hood might be used in cold weather. (VII. xvi.)

19. 1. The word 'son' is again used in the sense of 'son in Christ'. Cf. p. 229, note 11. 1.

20. 1. *Patronus*. Sirmond conjectures that this applies to Victorius, Count of Auvergne, under Euric. Cf. VII. xvii.

22. 1. St. Mamertus, Bishop of Vienne.

23. 1. *Et verbi gladio secare sectas*. Even in an elegy, Sidonius uses a play upon words.

2. *Antistes fuit ordine in secundo. Antistes* is usually employed for bishops only, though the rule does not seem to be invariable. Cf. *Riochatus antistes* (IX. ix. 6). If it stands for 'bishop' here, we should follow Sirmond and understand that though only a presbyter in rank, Claudianus performed so many duties for his brother, that he seemed a bishop himself.

24. 1. Until recently, only a few lines of the *Epitrepontes* were known, but within the last ten years a great part of the play has been discovered in Egypt (A. Körte, *Menandrea ex papyris et membranis vetustissimis*, Teubner, 1912,

pp. 9–43; G. Lefebvre, *Fragments d'un ms. de Ménandre*, Cairo, 1907; Grenfell and Hunt, *Oxyrhyncus Papyri*, Pt. x, no. 1236).

25. 1. Cantiliae (Chantelle) is mentioned in the Peutinger Table.

For a similar portrait of a 'young old man' cf. St. Jerome, *Ep.* x.

26. 1. *Gaius Tacitus.* The passage here quoted is derived from the *History*, v. 26: *Erga Vespasianum vetus mihi observantia; et cum privatus esset, amici vocabamur.* The words are put into the mouth of Claudius Civilis, the Batavian prince.

2. Ulpius was one of the names of Trajan.

27. 1. Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 89.

As Ex-prefect of Rome, and Patrician, Sidonius could fairly regard himself as the equal in official rank of Polemius, the last Prefect of a dismembered Gaul.

2. The passage seems to indicate the practice of confession. Cf. Ruricius of Limoges, *Ep.* I. viii. It may be noted that something like a public confession is suggested in the case of Germanicus (IV. xiii).

28. 1. Auvergne was perhaps at this time already under the dominion of Euric, whose hostility to Catholicism had proved disastrous to the Catholic churches, because he kept sees and parishes vacant, so that the fabrics fell into disrepair and new buildings were not erected.

29. 1. It was a proverb that people only went to Thespiae to admire the Eros of Praxiteles. (Cicero, *In Verrem*, iv. 3; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxvi.)

30. 1. Sidonius was perhaps still detained in exile by Euric. See Introduction, p. xlv.

32. 1. The capital of the second Lugdunensis was Rouen (Rotomagus).

33. 1. Perpetuus, Bishop of Tours, rebuilt in 470 the old church erected by St. Brice over the remains of St. Martin. The new church was not as durable as Sidonius hoped, and had to be rebuilt by Gregory of Tours. (*Hist. Franc.* II. xiv; IV. xx; X. xxxi.) It had been set on fire by Wiliachair

and his wife, and the inscription of Sidonius perished in the flames. (*Hist. Franc.* IV. xx.) Gregory describes the church as 160 feet long by 60 feet broad, the height 'to the vault' being 45 feet. It had 32 windows in the nave, and 20 in the presbytery. The whole building had thus 52 windows. It had 120 columns, of which 41 were in the choir, and 8 doors, of which 5 were in the same part of the building.

This description by Gregory long ago made it clear to archaeologists that the church of Perpetuus was a vaulted building, part of which was of the 'central' type, and allied to the memorial churches of the Christian East (H. Hübsch, *Die altchristlichen Kirchen nach den Baudenkmalen*, 1862, p. 108 and plate xlviii, figs. 6–9; J. Quicherat, *Revue archéologique*, 1869–70, and *Mélanges d'arch. et d'histoire*, 1886; G. Dehio and G. von Bezold, *Die kirchliche Baukunst des Abendlandes*, i, p. 267): in these peculiarities the church built by Namatius, described by Gregory in the same chapter, must have shared. The excavations carried out on the site of the old church of St. Martin during a series of years ending in 1887, confirmed these anticipations in a striking manner, revealing a round-ended choir with five projecting chapels (hemicycles), concentric with an interior columned space which must have enclosed the shrine (plan in G. Dehio's article in *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, x; 1889, pp. 13 ff.). The dimensions were found to agree closely with those given by Gregory; and it became certain that the plan was inspired by such memorial churches as those erected by Constantine in the Holy Land, the combination of a basilican nave with a choir on the 'central' system, especially recalling the arrangement of the *Anastasis*, or church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. The choir of St. Martin's was, in fact, as Dehio observed, half a 'Central-Bau'. This analogy with the *Anastasis* and other Eastern memorial types, together with the correspondence of the remains with Gregory's dimensions, makes the presumption very strong that whether the actual fabric of the choir discovered is of Perpetuus' time, or a reconstruction of some centuries later (as R. de Lasteyrie, *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*,

xxxiv, pp. 1 ff., and *L'architecture religieuse en France à l'époque romane*, 1912, p. 38), the lines of the original building were very closely followed. The salient points of interest are: (*a*) that Perpetuus in A.D. 470, having to build a church to contain a shrine visited by great numbers of pilgrims, adopted a style of architecture approved elsewhere as most suited for this particular purpose, but hitherto unknown in Gaul; and (*b*) that the type of choir thus introduced was the point of departure from which the 'chevet' of French Romanesque and Gothic architecture developed (Dehio, as above, pp. 21 ff.). The erection of Perpetuus' church was, therefore, no ordinary occurrence, but an epoch-making event in the history of Western architecture, and, as already remarked in the Introduction, p. ciii, it is curious that Sidonius seems to have seen nothing very remarkable in it beyond its splendour. It was vaulted throughout, probably with barrel-vaults (Dehio, p. 26, note 3); but Hübsch's conjecture that it had a central dome with numerous colonnettes, would appear to be somewhat problematical. In any case, with the church built by Namatius, it must have formed a complete contrast to the plain basilican type with wooden roof, such as the church of Patiens at Lyons. (Note 54. 1.)

2. Gregory of Tours (*Hist.* XI. xxxi) describes Perpetuus as sixth, not after St. Martin, but after St. Gatien; in *Hist.* II. xiv he mentions him as fifth after St. Martin.

34. 1. *Perpĕtuo . . . Perpetui.* (Cf. p. 223, note 43. 2, above.) The pun is of the usual kind.

35. 1. The arms and equipments which follow, suggest that this young prince was a Frank rather than a Burgundian. The skin garments of his suite may be the *rhenones*, so called because worn by peoples of the Rhine: *securis missilis* may be the *francisca*, and *lanceus uncatus* the *angon*. Cf. Introduction, p. xciii. The description, which has attracted the notice of all historians of the fifth century, gives a vivid picture of the wealth of the barbaric princes and the splendour of their attire. Prince Sigismer was to wed a Burgundian princess, perhaps the daughter of Chilperic (Schmidt, *Geschichte*, p. 380).

36. 1. The Aeduans were the people of Autun, Châlon, Mâcon, and Nevers.

2. *Aen.* viii. 510. The point is that the Etruscans required a *foreign* leader against Mezentius; Pallas was not eligible, because on the mother's side he was of Italic stock, and therefore not foreign.

37. 1. Cf. the eulogy of Auvergne in the Panegyric on Avitus, 139 ff.

39. 1. Cf. I. i; and Introduction, p. cxxxvi.

40. 1. Cf. Introduction, p. cxxiv.

41. 1. *Abdicatio* was the renunciation of *patria potestas* by a father who wished to 'cut off' an undutiful son. The cross, considered the most degrading of all punishments, was appointed for parricides, who might also be sewn in the *culeus*, or leather bag, in company with a cock, a serpent, and a monkey, and then thrown into the sea. The other punishments were burning, and exposure to wild beasts.

42. 1. Virgil, *Aen.* ix. 6 f. The translation given in the text is Conington's.

43. 1. *Cauta centesima est foeneratori.* This Letter seems to prove that it was not regarded as improper for a cleric to have money out at the ordinary rate of 12 per cent., provided that the borrower was well-to-do, and capable of repaying the loan. Maximus lent the money when a layman, but as cleric he still considers himself entitled to both principal and interest, only remitting the latter when he hears that the borrower is mortally ill and in difficulties. The tenor of the Letter shows that Sidonius considers his friend perfectly justified in his claims, and that he regards any remission as an act of grace.

2. *Cilicum vela.* Cf. II. ix. 8, and p. 225, note 52. 2, above. These were made of goat's hair.

44. 1. Maximus appears to have been elected in much the same way as Sidonius himself. Cf. Introduction, p. xxxv.

46. 1. For the election of bishops at this period, cf. Introduction, p. lxxvii.

2. Literally, *Apicianis plausibus.* Cf. p. 230 above, note 15. 1. In the next two lines Sidonius makes two plays

upon words close upon each other, *apice* and *Apicianis*, *praedae* and *praedia*.

47. 1. We may compare the case of the election at Bourges. (VII. ix.)

2. On these, see F. Z. Collombet, *Vies des Saints du diocèse de Lyon*, p. 180 f. Condat was founded in the fifth century. (Butler in C. M. H. i, p. 534.)

50. 1. *Grammatica dividit.* See Claudianus Mamertus' dedication of his book to Sidonius.

52. 1. *Idem velle atque idem nolle ea demum firma amicitia est.* Sallust, *Bell. Cat.* c. xx. 4. The sentiment is frequently repeated by later writers.

53. 1. Hodgkin supposes that Sidonius was acting as tutor to the sons of Simplicius.

54. 1. *Varicosi Arpinatis.* Sidonius refers to Cicero more than once as 'the Arpinate'; he is fond of describing an author as of the city of his birth or residence. *Varicosus* is presumably applied to Cicero, because as an orator he was continually standing and therefore subject to varicose veins.

2. *Quasi de harilao vetere novus falco prorumpas.* For *harilao*, some manuscripts read *hilario*; in either case the word must mean 'nest' or eyrie.

55. 1. Cf. Introduction, p. xlii, and the contents of Letter vii.

2. *Magistro militum Chilperico.* Schmidt considers that the Chilperic in question can only be Chilperici I, sole king of the Burgundians, for he alone would be qualified to bear this imperial title: the word *tetrarcha* in the next Letter he regards as a mere literary epithet, after Sidonius' manner. Chilperic II, nephew of Chilperic I, was more strictly a 'tetrarch', for he shared sovereignty with three brothers, of whom Gundobad, as the eldest, reigned at Lyons, Chilperic himself holding his court at Vienne. (Schmidt, *Geschichte*, pp. 376, 380.) For the office of *magister militum*, cf. Reid in C. M. H. i, p. 46.

3. The 'new prince' is the Emperor Julius Nepos, whom Chilperic, as representative of Glycerius, refused to recognize.

57. 1. Licinus was freedman of the Emperor Augustus; Narcissus and Pallas were freedmen of Claudius; Massa, Marcellus, and Carus, of Nero; Asiaticus stood in the same relation to Vitellius, and Parthenius to Domitian.

2. This passage makes mention of several minor offices, civil or municipal, which in Gaul as in Italy, the barbaric administration had to retain. The municipium elected to the office of *flamen* from the ranks of the *decuriones*, and this priesthood was regarded as conferring dignity upon electors and elected (Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, pp. 173, 326). The phrase *munuscula legatis* is perhaps explained by Cassiodorus, *Variae*, VII. xxxiii, where the present (*humanitas*) given to an ambassador is mentioned as a customary gift. On minor offices in the imperial and municipal service, see Marquardt, as above, i, pp. 92, 558 ff.; ii, 298 ff.; T. Hodgkin, *The Letters of Cassiodorus*, p. 108.

3. *Pelliti ad ecclesias, castorinati ad litanias.* Cf. Ambrose, *De dign. sacerdot*, chap. iv. *Castorinas quaerimus et sericas vestes, et ille se inter episcopos credit altiorem qui vestem induerit clariorem.* For *pellitus* see Introduction, p. xcii.

58. 1. Sidonius alludes to Chilperic and his queen as Tarquin the Elder and his consort Tanaquil, who is said to have commanded in his household. (Cf. Juvenal, *Sat.* iii. 566.) Tarquin was originally styled Lucumo; he was the son of Demaratus of Tarquinii in Etruria.

59. 1. The Cibyrates here mentioned are the two brothers Tlepolemus and Hiero, who assisted Verres to plunder Sicily.

2. *Germanicus . . . Agrippina.* The allusion is again to Chilperic and his consort.

3. Ablabius or Ablavius, whose authorship of the verses is only mentioned by Sidonius, was *Praefectus praetorio* A.D. 326–37. He was a favourite of Constantine, who at one time gave him charge of his son Constantius. The new emperor, however, stripped Ablavius of his dignities, exiled him to Bithynia, and countenanced his assassination. The blood-guiltiness here implied would seem at first sight to apply with less force to Chilperic I than to his nephew

Gundobad, who, exiled by his brothers Chilperic II and Godomar, finally repossessed himself of Lyons, killing Chilperic and murdering his queen and children. But if the preceding Letter refers to the first Chilperic, it seems probable that this does also. Cf. note 55. 2 above.

60. 1. Fausta, wife of Constantine, accused Crispus, son of that emperor by Minervina, of a guilty passion. The emperor sentenced Crispus to death; but on the discovery of his innocence, Fausta was herself put to death by suffocation in the vapour of a hot bath. Sidonius is the earliest authority for the statement that Crispus died by poison. It may be noted that he does not take the more favourable view of Constantine's character. Cf. Introduction, p. cxxv.

2. If the two preceding Letters are concerned with the times of Chilperic I, it seems probable that this too is of his period, and not that of his nephews. Cf. notes 55. 2, 59. 3.

3. Apollinaris (cf. III. xii), grandfather of Sidonius, was Prefect of the Gauls. (See Introduction, pp. xii and clxi.) (Decimus) Rusticus, grandfather of Aquilinus, held the same office in 410–11 under the tyrant Constantine (III). Captured by the generals of Honorius, Rusticus was rudely handled. Cf. Gregory of Tours, *Hist. Franc.* II. ix.

4. Jovinus assumed the purple in Gaul while the tyrant Constantine was still alive, but was killed at Narbonne in 412. Dardanus was Prefect in Gaul under Honorius in 409–10; a more favourable view of his character than that of Sidonius is taken by Jerome and Augustine. For the inscription commemorating the opening by Dardanus of a mountain road near Sisteron, cf. C. I. L. xii. 1524.

Gerontius, general of the tyrant Constantine in Spain, raised Maximus to the purple and besieged Constantine in Arles; on the appearance of Constantius before that city, and the desertion of his own troops, he fled into Spain, where he died.

61. 1. The offices of tribune and notarius were in like manner both borne by the grandfather of Cassiodorus in the reign of Valentinian III. The first was military, corresponding to our 'colonel', the second was secretarial, involving

confidential duties near the person of the emperor. Cf. Cassiodorus, *Variae*, I. iv, VI. xvi; and Hodgkin, *The Letters of Cassiodorus*, p. 3.

63. 1. Eusebius (*Chron.* year 135) mentions Palaemon as living in Hadrian's time; Seneca (Preface to *Nat. Quaest.* iv) alludes to his brother Gallio. Ausonius (*Carm.* v and xv) refers to Delphidius, Tiro, and Agroecius. Jerome speaks of Magnus as an orator of repute.

64. 1. The enforced service of Calminius was probably exceptional; for though Gallo-Romans served in the Burgundian army, it was not the habit of the Visigoths to admit them to their ranks. (L. Schmidt, *Geschichte*, p. 294.)

65. 1. Seronatus is here described as returning from one of his treasonable visits to Toulouse. (Cf. Introduction, p. xxxviii.) Javols (Gabales) is in the modern department of Lozère.

2. Cf. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ix. 88; Aelian, *Hist. Anim.* ii. 13; Claudian, *In Eutrop.* ii. 425; Oppian, *Halieut.* v. 71, &c.

67. 1. *Calentes Baiae.* Sirmond and Savaron identify these baths with Chaudesaigues, on the borders of Auvergne and Rouergue; another conjecture places them at Mont d'Or. Cf. Grégoire and Collombet, ii, p. 87.

2. Virgil, *Aen.* v. 440.

3. *Rogationum.* Cf. p. 241, note 95. 1, and Introduction, p. xli.

4. This is an unusual joke for a bishop, as more than one commentator has remarked.

68. 1. *Eruderatum.* The use of this word seems to show that the text of the Prophets had been corrupted. (Tillemont, *Mémoires*, xvi, p. 236.)

69. 1. Cf. III. vii. 2; Introduction, p. xli.

70. 1. Roscia, one of Sidonius' daughters. Cf. Introduction, p. xiv.

71. 1. The church erected by Patiens at Lyons. Cf. II. x. 2.

Guizot and others here consider that Sidonius was already a bishop when this letter was written; Tillemont held with

more probability (*Mém.* xvi, p. 199) that he was a comparatively young man. Cf. Chaix, ii, p. 29.

73. 1. Cf. Virgil, *Aen.* v. 499.

2. The description of the ball-play in this Letter would be more interesting if we could form an idea of the rules of the game. From the fact that a number of players are engaged, and that violent collisions occur, we may hazard a guess that it is the *Harpastum* (ἁρπαστόν), in which one player throws the ball high in the air, and the others run forward to seize it before he can catch it again. Cf. Marquardt, *Privatleben*, p. 846.

74. 1. *Dies bonos male ferentem.* Perhaps a person spoiled by good fortune.

75. 1. Literally, 'the Aeduan city' (*Haeduae civitati*).

76. 1. This Letter is interesting in relation to the status of *coloni*. Sidonius demands that the ravisher shall be raised from the state of a *colonus*, or dependent cultivator, to that of a free plebeian (*plebeiam potius habere personam quam colonariam*) in order that he may legally marry a woman already free.

2. *In Concilio.* This probably refers to the *Curia* of Lyons; the curial system continued under Visigothic and Burgundian dominion. Cf. Schmidt, *Geschichte*, p. 292.

77. 1. *Evectionem refundunt. Evectio* was the right to the free use of the *cursus publicus*, or post system. Here it seems to correspond to our phrase 'travelling expenses'.

79. 1. *Episcopus Episcoporum.* St. Clement uses this phrase at the beginning of his first letter to St. James of Jerusalem. The present is an answer to the kindly letter of congratulation sent by Lupus to Sidonius on his assumption of his episcopal office, and still preserved. (See Fertig, ii, pp. 7–8.)

2. Luke v. 8.

3. Luke v. 12.

80. 1. *Militiae Lerinensis.* Cf. VIII. xiv; *Carm.* xvi. 105–16. For the monastery of Lerins, founded by Hilary, see the publications of H. Moris on the cartulary, archives, monuments, &c., issued in 1883, 1893, and 1909. Cf. also Alliez, *Histoire du monastère de Lérins*, 1862; *Hist. littéraire*

de la France, ii, pp. 37, 159; Chaix, i, p. 419; and the recent work by Dr. Cooper Marsdin, *The History of the Islands of the Lerins*, 1913.

82. 1. The daughter of Agrippinus had married the son of Eutropia, on whose death she refused to return to her father's house, preferring to remain with her mother-in-law, whose generous treatment she preferred.

83. 1. Leontius, as bishop of the capital (Arles), took precedence of all the Gallican bishops.

84. 1. Lit. *auctoritas coronae tuae.* The clerical 'crown' is the tonsure, and the word *corona* is used to designate a priest, as *purpura* to signify an emperor. Cf. VII. viii. Also Ennodius, *Ep.* IV. xxii; Augustine, *Ep.* xxxiii; Gregory of Tours, *Vitae Patrum*, xvii; and Grégoire and Collombet's note on this passage.

2. *Vargus*, as we gather from the Ripuarian and Salic laws of the Franks (cf. *Lex Salica*, xiv, *add.* 5, and lv. 2), literally meant, in the Teutonic dialect, one 'outlawed', or exiled from his country. (Cf. Sirmond, Notes, p. 65.) The episode to which this letter relates is rather difficult to follow. Most commentators have assumed that the woman was carried off from Clermont to Troyes. But Sidonius commonly uses *iste* for 'this', and *istic* for 'here' (cf. VIII. ix. 15, line 17 of the poem: *nos istic positos*, i.e. here, at Bordeaux); it seems probable, therefore, that when he says *isto deductam . . . isticque distractam*, he is referring to Clermont. The victim may have been abducted from some other place in or near Auvergne, and taken to the market at Clermont to be sold, afterwards passing into the control of Sidonius' man of affairs (*negotiator noster*) or of some man of business with whom he was acquainted ('*our friend the banker*'—Hodgkin). The necessity for a visit by the parties to Troyes would, on this theory, arise simply from the fact that Prudens, whose evidence was essential, had returned to his home in that city. The Vargi in many respects resembled the Bagaudae of a rather earlier time.

86. 1. The Visigoths.

87. 1. Cf. Introduction, p. xxxvi.

88. 1. *Epistulam formatam.* The 'formal' or canonical letter was an attestation given by the bishop to priests and clerks of his diocese when they travelled abroad; without it they were not admitted to the sacrament or to ecclesiastical functions in the districts which they visited. The bishop himself had to obtain a similar letter from the metropolitan or primate when he travelled. Such letters were a safeguard against deception at a time when privilege of clergy made imposture profitable, and they were drawn up with great care. The letters authorizing temporary absence were called *Commendatitiae* (εἰρηνικαί, συστατικαί); those accorded when the applicant did not intend to return were styled *dimissoriae* (ἀπολυτικαί). See Sirmond, Notes, p. 66; Grégoire and Collombet, ii. 146–7, with the references there given; and Fertig, ii, p. 36.

90. 1. *Debitum glebae canonem* = the Emphyteutic canon: *Canonem proprie dixit pensionem quae debetur ex praedio emphyteutico* (Sirmond, Notes, p. 68).

91. 1. Cf. III. iv. 1; IV. v. 1; VIII. xiii. 3.

2. Cf. Pliny, *Ep.* IX. iii.

92. 1. Chilperic the Burgundian, now ruling over Lyons.

2. *Photinianorum.* The Photinians were heretics of the fourth century, who maintained the tenets of Photius, Bishop of Sirmium in Hungary. They were in substantial agreement with the Arians.

94. 1. Joseph was a type of Christ.

2. Viviers = *Albensis* (*urbs*). Alba Helviorum was its ancient name.

3. *Tricastina urbs.*

95. 1. For the Rogations first instituted by Mamertus of Vienne, see Gregory of Tours, *Hist. Franc.* II. xxxiv; Caesarius of Arles, *Homilies*, xxx, and First Council of Orleans, Canon, 27. For the Rogations instituted by St. Gall at a time of pestilence, cf. Greg. *Hist. Franc.* IV. v. Cf. also V. xiv, VII. i, and Fertig, ii, p. 15.

97. 1. St. Ambrose had discovered the bodies of two saints, Gervasius and Protasius. (Ambrose, *Ep.* xv; *Sermon*, xci; Augustine, *Conf.* ix. 7; *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 8;

Gregory of Tours, *De gloria Martyrum*, I. xlvii; *Acta Sanctorum*, June 19).

98. 1. The crafty traveller (*callidus viator*) is Amantius, who frequently carried letters for Sidonius. An analogous episode to that which forms the subject of this Letter is recorded by Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Franc.* III. xv).

2. Cf. note 88. 1.

102. 1. *Contestatiunculas*. *Contestatio* signified a preface to the Mass (Mabillon, *De Liturgia Gallic.* i. 3; Tillemont, *Mémoires*, xvi, p. 277). Grégoire and Collombet suggest that the *Contestatiunculae* here mentioned may be the Masses composed by Sidonius, and published as a book, with an added preface by Gregory of Tours. Cf. *Hist. Franc.* II. xxii.

104. 1. Vaison was the capital of the Vocontii, whose alliance Hannibal sought against Rome. It was now in Burgundian territory.

105. 1. *Aquitanicae primae*. The provinces were subdivided by different emperors, sub-divisions receiving the name of *prima*, *secunda*, &c., but the epithet *prima* was given to that which contained the former metropolis of the undivided province; e.g. Lugdunensis Prima was the division containing Lyons. Bourges was the capital of Aquitanica Prima, Bordeaux of Aquitanica Secunda.

107. 1. Here in the form Evarix. For Euric's campaigns resulting in the cession of Auvergne in 475, see Introduction, p. xxxvi. Gregory of Tours makes special reference to this Letter (*Hist. Franc.* II. xxv.).

108. 1. It might be supposed from the account given by Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Franc.* II. xxv) that Euric only barricaded the doors of the churches with brambles to prevent the entrance of worshippers; but this is surely not what Sidonius means.

109. 1. *Si benedictione succidua non accipiat dignitatis heredem*. This seems to imply that the dying wish of a parish priest influenced the choice of his successor.

2. This refers to the commission of the four bishops appointed to negotiate terms of peace between the empire and Euric. Cf. Introduction, p. xlii.

110. 1. Cf. VI. viii. 1; VII. ii. 1, x. 1; IX. iv. 1.

2. *Audebant se quondam fratres Latio dicere.* Cf. p. 222, note 42. 1, and Lucan, *Phars.* i. 427: *Arvernique ausi Latio se fingere fratres Sanguine ab Iliaco populi.*

3. The people of Auvergne had successfully sustained a siege of the Visigoths, who drew off into winter quarters.

4. See p. 221, note 34. 1.

111. 1. The phrase is bitterly ironical. Cf. Introduction, p. xliii.

2. It seems best to take this in a general sense. For other explanations with a more specific reference, cf. Grégoire and Collombet, ii, pp. 257 ff.; Sirmond, Notes, p. 75. One objection to these is that they assume the loss of Marseilles to Rome at this period, a fact of which there seems to be no sufficient evidence.

112. 1. *Corona tua.* Cf. note 84. 1.

115. 1. i.e. Pythagoras.

116. 1. *Paginae decretalis.* Cf. I. vii: *gestis decretalibus.* Credentials, or authority from a public body.

2. Agroecius of Sens. Cf. Letter VII. v. above.

3. Cf. I. i. 4.

119. 1. Acts viii. 18.

2. Luke i. 5.

120. 1. *Domi habuit unde disceret.* Terence, *Adelphi*, III. iii. 59 (453).

2. Exodus xxxvi. 1 ff.

123. 1. See note 110. 1 above.

124. 1. The 'neighbours' are the Visigoths, the 'protectors' the Burgundians. Cf. Introduction, p. xxxvi.

126. 1. *Antistes.* This word usually signifies a bishop; but the terms of the present letter hardly suggest that dignity for Himerius. Claudianus Mamertus, a simple priest, is elsewhere described as *antistes ordine in secundo* (IV. xi); it seems probable that the word should also be understood 'of the second order' in the present place, and that Himerius had not attained episcopal rank. (See Grégoire and Collombet, ii. 269–70.) In this case the words *dignitatis auctorem* would imply that he was ordained by Lupus.

Cf. IX. ix. 6, where the word *antistes* is used of Riochatus, and xvii of the present book, where it is applied to Abraham, an abbot.

129. 1. The point of the Letter is that Sidonius, who has never seen his correspondent, claims, on the ground of a common culture, a greater intimacy with Philagrius than any mere neighbours in whom such culture was lacking. He reinforces his opinion, which he seems to hold with unnecessary emphasis, with some parade of scientific argument. The philosophical ideas here developed are derived from Platonism (cf. Chaix, i, p. 355 f.), but the manner is reminiscent of Seneca.

130. 1. The allusion is to encaustic painting in which the colour is mixed with wax, applied in a molten state with a spatula. This method, very popular in late Roman times, is most familiar to us from the mummy-portraits of the Fayûm, but was popular in Early Byzantine art. For references see Dalton, *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, p. 316.

2. *Filium Marci Ciceronis populus Romanus non agnoscebat loquentem*: because he had not his father's eloquence, and this, not any physical quality, was the only thing to ensure his general recognition. The source of the quotation appears to be unknown.

131. 1. Sidonius is here very frank in his expression of dislike for the barbarian. Cf. Introduction, p. xcii.

132. 1. The word used is *professio*. Either the ecclesiastical profession must be meant, or the common pursuit of poetry. If at the time of writing Sidonius was already bishop, he would not have occasion to make frequent visits to Vienne. Nor is anything said to prove that Salonius was a cleric.

134. 1. The poem sufficiently relates the chief events in Abraham's life. He represents the type of the oriental ascetic settled in the West. Cf. Introduction, p. lxxix.

2. The Sassanian Yezdegerd, whose great persecution began in 420 and lasted thirty years. Gregory of Tours says that Abraham was liberated by an angel. (*De vitis Patrum*, iii.)

135. 1. i.e. Jerusalem captured by Titus.

2. Carthage.

3. *Et quae lanigero de sue nomen habent*, i.e. Milan. *Vocatum Mediolanum ab eo quod ibi sus in medio lanea perhibetur inventa.* Isidore, *Orig.* XV. i.

Ad moenia Gallis
Condita, lanigeri suis ostentantia pellem.
Claudian, x. 183.

4. The Euphrates, by which Abraham was born, was also one of the rivers of Paradise.

5. *Lirinensium sive Grinincensium.* For Lerins, see note 80. 1. The Grinincenses were a community dwelling at Grigny, on the Rhône, not far from Vienne. (Tillemont, *Mémoires*, xvi, p. 259.) The community founded by Abraham at Clermont became the monastery of St. Cirgues.

136. 1. *A te principium, tibi desinet.* Virgil, *Ecl.* viii. 11. Cf. I. i.

140. 1. Apollonius of Tyana, if not often openly attacked, was as a rule viewed with disfavour by the Church, and regarded as something of a charlatan. Cf. J. S. Phillimore, *Philostratus in honour of Apollonius of Tyana*, Oxford, 1912, Introduction, pp. xciv. ff.

2. Nicomachus and Tascius Victorianus were two scholars who corrected and revised current editions of ancient authors, just as Sidonius himself corrected the Heptateuch for Ruricius (V. xv).

3. *Translatio.* Sirmond, arguing from other occurrences of this word in Sidonius (e.g. IX. xi, xvi), considers that it here means transcription. It may, however, as Fertig thinks (Part ii, p. 22), bear its proper sense; if so, the translation has not survived.

4. The fortress or castle of Livia, where Sidonius was confined by Euric, was between Carcassonne and Narbonne. Cf. Introduction, p. xliv.

141. 1. The peoples beyond the sea and on the Waal are the Vandals of Africa, and the Franks respectively.

145. 1. Virg. *Georg.* iv. 176; *Ecl.* i. 23.

146. 1. Turcius Rufius Astyrius, or Asterius (as his name is usually written), consul with Protogenes in 449. Some of his 'consular diptychs' are preserved, and the words *datique fasti* may refer, as Sirmond suggests, to the distribution of such diptychs. The *sportula* might take the form of silver baskets. Cf. Symmachus, *Ep.* ii. 81 ; ix. 109.

147. 1. This was a law of Theodosius promulgated in Constantinople twenty-five years before the consulship of Asterius, but not in force in Gaul until the latter date. Cf. Sirmond, Notes, p. 85 ; Th. Mommsen, *Theodosiani Libri XVI*, vol. I, pt. ii, p. 194.

148. 1. Amyclae, situated on the coast of Italy between Gaëta and Terracina (?), was a colony of Sparta, and may be held to have inherited a reputation for Laconism. Virgil (*Aen.* x. 564) calls it *tacitae*, and Servius, in his Commentary, gives more than one conjectural reason for the epithet, in addition to that mentioned above. (Cf. Grégoire and Collombet, ii. 365.) But the Laconian Amyclae may be intended.

2. *Vitruvius . . . Columella.* Well-known writers, the first on architecture, the second on agriculture. Vitruvius lived in the time of Julius Caesar and Augustus, Columella in that of Claudius.

149. 1. The statement that the Saxons returned to their homes '*de continenti*' rather suggests that they came from islands which might either be situated off the coast of Schleswig or even be themselves the British Isles. For the evidence as to Saxon settlement in England before the middle of the fifth century, see Beck in C. M. H. pp. 382 ff.

Namatius was 'admiral' for Euric on the Atlantic seaboard, with the duty of beating off piratical attacks.

150. 1. M. Terentius Varro (116–28 B.C.), a voluminous writer who produced nearly 500 books on historical, scientific, and antiquarian subjects. His *Logistorics* were probably dialogues like those of Cicero. Eusebius of Caesarea, the chronographer (A.D. 265–338), sought to confirm the data of the Bible. His work is divided into two parts, the *Chronographia* containing the material for the synthetic treatment of the second part or *Canones*, which gives the rulers of

the world in parallel columns, with notes, while a separate column gives the years of the world's age. The Canons were translated by Jerome. Cf. J. B. Bury, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, II, Appendix i; Stewart in C. M. H. i, p. 582.

151. 1. The Emperor Julius Nepos began his reign by an attempt to render the civil and military services more efficient.

152. 1. Serranus and Camillus are quoted as examples of illustrious Romans of the Republican period devoted to rural life. Serranus was an *agnomen* of Regulus, who was actually engaged in sowing when his elevation to the consulship was announced to him in 257 B.C.

153. 1. Racilia was the wife of Cincinnatus.

154. 1. *Satur est cum dicit Horatius Evohe.* Juvenal, *Sat.* vii. 62. The poet suggests that a well-nourished system is essential to the production of good poetry, and that when Horace wrote *Od.* ii. 19 he had dined well.

2. *Necdum enim quidquam de hereditate socruali vel in usum tertiae sub pretio medietatis.* One of the most difficult passages in the Letters. Mommsen (*Praefatio*, p. xlvii) supposes Sidonius to have the usufruct of a third of the property, on condition that he is to buy half of the estate from the heirs, of whom he is not one—a supposition which presents various difficulties. Equal difficulties attend the effort to represent the third part as the *tertia* exacted from Roman landowners by their Teutonic conquerors. In the translation, I have adopted a suggestion kindly made by Prof. J. S. Reid, who, however, thinks it rather daring for definite adoption, because there is no authority for *medietas* as anything but a half-share. I have taken the risk of another rendering, because Sidonius employs several Latin words in an irregular and unclassical way, and it seems quite possible that he may here use *medietas* in the general sense of 'portion', as 'moiety' is sometimes used in English.

3. Sidonius was now detained by Euric at Bordeaux. See Introduction, p. xlv.

155. 1. A town in Phocis, sacred to Apollo. For the Boeotian Muses (*Hyantiae Camenae*), cf. *Carm.* ix. 285.

2. *Istic positos*, i.e. at Bordeaux. The following lines,

with their ethnographical details, are perhaps the best known in Sidonius. (Cf. Introduction, p. xciii.) The 'glaucous' cheeks of the Herulians were perhaps painted rather than tattooed. The tribe was settled on the Lower Rhine (cf. Cassiodorus, *Variae*, III. iii), and their representatives were probably at Bordeaux, because Euric was regarded as their protector against Frankish aggression. (Schmidt, *Geschichte*, pp. 268–9, note 5). Italy's prayer for aid in expelling the barbarian may refer to the Roman desire for the expulsion of Odovakar (ibid.).

156. 1. *Arsaces* is here used for a monarch of the later Sassanian dynasty—Peroz, or Firoze, at this time engaged in hostilities with the White Huns, who were encouraged by the East Roman Empire. (Procopius, *De Bello Persico*, I. iv; Tabari, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber*, Nöldeke's ed., p. 119.)

157. 1. *Meliboeus esse coepi.* The reference is to Virgil's Eclogue, where Meliboeus is the countryman dispossessed of his lands.

2. This maxim does not occur in the writings of Symmachus which have come down to us.

158. 1. Cf. Pliny, *Ep.* i. 20, and vi. 33. The most famous speech of each orator is quoted.

159. 1. Vesunnici and Nitiobroges.

2. Drepanius, author of a panegyric on Theodosius. Anthedius, a poet mentioned elsewhere by Sidonius. Paulinus, perhaps a rhetor of Périgueux, though there is more than one person of the name who might be intended here. Alcimus, orator and poet, whose real name was Alethius. On these personages see *Hist. litt. de la France*, i, p. 419; ii, pp. 136–8, 469, 537.

160. 1. Orpheus.

2. A Thracian huntress-goddess, 'Or she', &c. The reference is to Atalanta.

3. The text is:

Si vestigia fasceata nudi
per summum digiti regant citatis
firmi ingressibus atque vinculorum

concurrentibus ansulis reflexa
ad crus per cameram catena surgat.

Possibly the *compagus* may be the kind of shoe described. Cf. Marquardt, *Privatleben*, p. 589.

162. 1. *Echoïcos.* Sirmond quotes the following lines of Pentadius, to illustrate the meaning of *versus echoïci*:

Per cava saxa sonat pecudum mugitibus Echo
Voxque repulsa iugis per cava saxa sonat.

For the *versus recurrens*, or palindrome, see note 207. 1.

'By repetitions' (*per anadiplosin*). Repetition is a poetical artifice commonly employed by Virgil, e.g.:

Sequitur pulcherrimus Astur,
Astur equo fidens, &c.

164. 1. For a concise statement of the elements of astrological belief in Roman times, see Daremberg and Saglio, article *Divinatio*, p. 302. Also A. Maury, *La magie et l'astrologie dans l'antiquité*, 1862; F. Lenormant, *La divination et la science des présages chez les Chaldéens*, 1875; A. Häbler, *Astrologie im Alterthum*, 1879. Of the persons mentioned in the next paragraph, Vertacus, Thrasybulus, and Saturninus, the first and third are named as mathematicians in the letter to Leontius preceding *Carm.* xxii.

166. 1. Langon (Alingo) is on the left bank of the Garonne, south-east of Bordeaux.

2. *Catonis in Syrte.* Cato with ten thousand men crossed the desert of Leptis in thirty days. The exploit, which became almost legendary, is recorded by Strabo and Lucan.

167. 1. *Tabula calculis strata bicoloribus.* This mention of a board, with men of two colours, seems to confirm the belief that the game played by Theodoric was something akin to backgammon. Cf. p. 216, note 5. 1.

2. *Medulicae supellectilis epulones.* The oysters of Médoc were famous even in Rome. Cf. Ausonius, *Ep.* vii and ix.

170. 1. Cf. p. 239, note 80. 1.

2. *Archimandritas.* An archimandrite, in the Orthodox Eastern Church, approximately corresponds to an abbot in the West.

172. 1. The prophecy of St. Annianus (Aignan) is recorded by Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Franc.* ii. 7). Orleans was hard pressed by Attila, and the bishop promised succour from Aëtius. That general arrived at the very moment when the walls of the town were breached, and prevented the Huns from entering the city. The story is not accepted by modern historical criticism.

173. 1. Juvenal, *Sat.* i. 5–6.

174. 1. Cf. Symmachus, *Ep.* iii. to Siburius, quoted by Sirmond: *Si tibi vetustatis tantus est amor, pari studio in verba prisca redeamus, quibus Salii canunt*, &c.

176. 1. The tenth book of the younger Pliny's letters contains only the correspondence between himself and Trajan, and Sidonius does not count it as one of the collection.

177. 1. For *Levites* or *Levita*, signifying 'deacon', cf. C. H. Turner in C. M. H. i, p. 157.

180. 1. Cf. p. 239, note 80. 1.

2. An allusion to the loss of Sidonius' estate. Sirmond considers this letter to have been written when Sidonius was in exile at Bordeaux. Cf. VIII. ix.

181. 1. *Paginam rusticantem.* Cf. Introduction, p. cxxvi.

183. 1. The treaty of peace between Julius Nepos and Euric.

187. 1. Joshua ix. The Gibeonites were made hewers of wood and drawers of water for endeavouring to avoid servitude by pretending that their city was far off, when it was really near.

188. 1. *Aptae fuistis, aptissime defuistis.* One of the worst examples of Sidonius' delight in puns and verbal jugglery.

2. *Satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum.* Cf. Sallust, *Cat.* v. 4.

189. 1. *Riochatus antistes ac monachus, atque istius mundi bis peregrinus.* It seems uncertain whether Riochatus had been made a bishop in Brittany, or whether he was a priest 'of the second order'. Cf. note 126. 1.

190. 1. On Sassanian textiles and embossed silver dishes the hunter is sometimes depicted holding a cub in each hand. Cf. note 203. 1.

2. The book was probably one of those in which Faustus established the divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost against the Arians, and not, as Ampère suggested

(*Hist. litt. de la France*, ii, p. 250), his work on Grace. (Chaix, ii, p. 143.)

192. 1. Deut. xxi. 11–13.

193. 1. The list of philosophers is interesting in connexion with artistic (sculptural?) types, upon which the several descriptions appear to be based.

194. 1. Units were counted on the left hand, hundreds on the right. (Pliny, xxxiv. 7; Juvenal, *Sat.* x. 249.) Probably, as Sirmond suggests, Sidonius exaggerates the age of Faustus.

2. This letter is of interest for the status of a defaulting clerk. Injuriosus ought to have brought Aprunculus a dimissorial letter from Sidonius. Without this his position was irregular, and he exposed himself to possible retributive action on Sidonius' part. Cf. note 88. 1, and Chaix, ii, p. 102.

195. 1. This difficult Letter perhaps refers to an episode in connexion with the issue of the second instalment of the Letters. Sidonius seems to have sent his manuscript to Lupus, but with the request that the bishop, after looking it through, should pass it on to some other person unnamed. This request appears to have offended Lupus, who wrote to Sidonius to air his grievance. Cf. Chaix, ii, p. 283.

197. 1. If Lupus was elected bishop in 427, the date of the present Letter is 477. Cf. Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux*, ii, p. 449.

199. 1. This passage again suggests a date. Assuming Sidonius to have been elected bishop in 472, the year when he presumably abandoned secular poetry, the present Letter, as Baronius pointed out, would have been written in 484.

201. 1. The passage testifies to the lively interest of Sidonius in metrical questions. Form, with him, was of no less importance than matter.

2. i.e. Apuleius, of Madaura in Africa.

202. 1. *Magistri Epistularum.* Petrus was secretary of Majorian. See p. clxxvi.

2. i.e. Arles. Sidonius was there with Majorian in 461. See Introduction, p. xxiii.

203. 1. Sirmond quotes Ammianus Marcellinus (Bk. xxiv) for the Babylonian hangings used at the time of Julian's sojourn in Ctesiphon, all representing royal hunting scenes.

The present passage also recalls the well-known Sassanian silk textiles. (Cf. note 190. 1 above.) Niphates, a mountain in Armenia, here represents that country.

204. 1. *Tepidas ad officinas.* The translation given is based on the suggestion of Fertig (i, p. 31), who compares *Carm.* xxiii. 131: *Smyrnaeae incude doctas officinae.* The allusion would be to the heat of a busy forge, metaphorically representing a thorough and efficient school of music, dance, and song. *Thymele* is the platform on which the *choregus* stood in the middle of the orchestra; *pale* (lit. 'a place for wrestling') might then be the stage on which mimes appeared. (Cf. *Carm.* xxiii. 301, 302.) *Lepidas* has been suggested as an alternative to *tepidas.*

207. 1. *Versus recurrentes.* Cf. note 162. 1. The second of the two palindrome verses in the text is of unknown origin, and yields no obvious sense (Forcellini, *Lexicon*, s.v. *peredo*). Of the first, as given here in isolation, the same might almost be said; but at some time it was attached to a hexameter, so as to form a recurrent couplet, and placed in the mouth of Satan, to enliven the description of a pilgrimage to Rome by a personage variously given as St. Martin, a canon of Combremer, &c. The holy man changes the Devil into a beast of burden, and rides him towards his destination, his impatience arousing the following protest:

> '*Signa te, signa; temere me tangis et angis;*
> *Roma tibi subito motibus ibit amor.*'

'Cross, aye, cross thyself; 'tis all for nought that thou strikest and plaguest me, since my paces will soon bring before thee Rome, the goal of thy desire.' Whatever may be the date of the first line, the second is shown by the terms of Sidonius' allusion (*illud antiquum*) to have been well known in the second half of the fifth century. The invention of recurrent verses was commonly attributed to Sotades, a poet of the third century B.C. The best example in Greek is the NIΨON ANOMHMA MH MONAN OΨIN, inscribed on many mediaeval fonts (in England, those of Sandbach, Harlow, Melton Mowbray, Hadley, and others), and traced to the time of the Byzan-

tine Emperor Leo VI (Leo Allatius, *Excerpta varia Graecorum Sophistarum*, &c., p. 398, 1641; *Anthol. Graec. Epigrammatum* VI, xiii, p. 563. Ed. H. Steph. Frankfort, 1600).

208. 1. i.e. Livy. The part of his history dealing with the career of Julius Caesar is no longer extant, but it still survived in the time of Sidonius, and Symmachus was acquainted with it (*Ep.* IV. xvii).

2. Some read : Viventius Martialis. Sirmond conjectures that the person intended may be Gargilius Martialis, author of a life of Caesar, cited by Vopiscus and Lampridius. L. Cornelius Balbus, with Oppius, represented Caesar's interests at Rome during the Civil War. No diary of his is now known.

3. The custom of bringing a claque to applaud the public reading of a friend was very common during the Roman empire. It is mentioned by Pliny, Juvenal, and other writers.

211. 1. *Peragratis dioecesibus*. *Dioecesis* is used here in the sense of 'parish'. Cf. Sirmond, Notes, p. 101.

212. 1. Mme de Sévigné, writing from Grignan in 1695, complained that the inkstands were frozen in the bitter cold of early February.

2. *Mytilenaei oppidi vernulas* = Sapphics, Sappho being a native of Mytilene.

213. 1. *Cum meis poni statuam . . . Nerva Trajanus titulis videret.* The allusion is to the statue erected in the reign of Avitus, after Sidonius had delivered the panegyric of that emperor. See Introduction, p. xviii. The two libraries are those dedicated respectively to Greek and Latin literature.

2. i. e. the office of Prefect of Rome, carrying with it the presidency of the Senate, conferred on Sidonius by Anthemius in 468. Cf. Introduction, p. xxix.

214. 1. St. Saturninus, first bishop of Toulouse, martyred in the second half of the third century. (Cf. Gregory of Tours, *Hist. Franc.* I. xxviii, and see *Acta Sanctorum*, Nov. 29.) The 'Capitol' from which he was flung is that of Toulouse.

2. The *regula Flacci* is contained in the third and fourth verses of *Epistle* ii :

Amphora coepit
Institui, currente rota cur urceus exit?

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